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About the Journal

Scope

The Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal (IBAS Journal) is a rigorously ***double-blind peer-reviewed***, ***biannual*** academic journal that fosters innovative scholarship in countries with British and American literary traditions. IBAS Journal welcomes submissions from scholars, researchers, and advanced graduate students working across disciplines, including ***literature***, ***language***, ***culture***, and ***society*** of Britain and America. We are particularly interested in any kind of scholarly work from the Medieval Age to the present day. Our goal is to foster a deeper understanding of Britain and America through research conducted in a global context, including those from non-Anglophone countries.

Peer Review Policy

The Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal employs a double-blind peer review process to ensure the quality and objectivity of published scholarship.

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Publication Frequency

Two issues per year

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31.12.2024

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal. It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that we present this first edition, marking the beginning of a journey dedicated to fostering academic excellence and promoting intercultural dialogue within the vast fields of British and American studies.

Our mission is to create a dynamic platform for scholars, educators, and practitioners to share insightful research and perspectives that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries. By embracing an interdisciplinary approach, we aim to enrich the understanding of cultural, linguistic, social, and literary dimensions that shape British and American societies.

In this issue, we are thrilled to showcase a diverse range of scholarly work that reflects the breadth and depth of our field:

1. Remodelling Verbal Synonymy for the History of English: Sources and Methods
By Prof. Dr. Michael Bilynsky
Professor Bilynsky offers a compelling exploration of verbal synonymy in the English language, delving into historical sources and methodological approaches that shed light on linguistic evolution.

2. Culture as a Mirror: Reflections of a Career TESOL Instructor
By M.A. Wayne Carl Berg
Berg shares insightful reflections from his career as a TESOL instructor, examining how cultural contexts influence language teaching and learning experiences.

3. Professional Pathways in U.S. Social Work: An Overview of Education, Licensure, and Supervision
By Asst. Prof. Dr. Elvan Atamtürk and Prof. Dr. Rıza Gökler
Atamtürk and Gökler provide a comprehensive overview of the social work profession in the United States, discussing educational pathways, licensure requirements, and the significance of supervisory practices.

4. Psychological Self-Realization in Henry James's The Portrait of a Lady
By M.A. Zafer Darkouchi
Zafer Darkouchi presents a nuanced literary analysis of Henry James's classic novel, exploring themes of identity, autonomy, and psychological development.

5. The Impact of Social Work Practices in the United States of America with a Multicultural Structure
By Dr. Serdarhan Duru and Ethem Dolek, PhD Candidate
Duru and Dölek examine how the multicultural fabric of the United States influences social work practices, highlighting challenges and strategies for effective service delivery.

We are also honored to feature two special contributions that enrich this inaugural issue:

A Letter of Support
From Mr. John Silver, Regional English Language Officer of the U.S. Mission to Türkiye
Mr. Silver shares inspiring words of encouragement and support for our journal, underscoring the importance of cross-cultural collaboration and academic exchange.

An Exclusive Interview with Mr. Barbaros Tapan
Permanent Member of the Golden Globe Awards
In this insightful interview, Mr. Tapan offers a unique perspective on the global film industry, discussing the cultural and artistic significance of cinema and its role in bridging diverse audiences.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our esteemed contributors for their invaluable work and to Mr. Silver and Mr. Tapan for their generous participation. Their contributions exemplify the collaborative spirit and intellectual rigor that our journal strives to promote.

As we embark on this new endeavor, we hope that this issue serves as a catalyst for further interdisciplinary research and meaningful discussions. We invite you, our readers, to engage with these articles, share your thoughts, and consider contributing to future editions. Your support and participation are vital as we aim to build a vibrant community of scholars and practitioners dedicated to advancing British and American studies.

Thank you for joining us on this exciting journey. We look forward to fostering connections, sparking insightful dialogues, and contributing to the ever-evolving landscape of interdisciplinary scholarship.

Warm regards,

Dr. Kenan Yerli & Dr. Gülbaşak Diktaş Yerli

Co-Editors
Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal

The Letter of Support

From Mr. John Silver, Regional English Language Officer of the U.S. Mission to Türkiye

10.12.2024

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the Regional English Language Office of the United States Embassy in Türkiye, I am writing to congratulate you on the inaugural issue of the Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal. The journal's commendable focus on fostering intercultural dialogue through the English language—a global lingua franca—has great potential to significantly contribute to British and American Studies. In our increasingly interconnected world, effective cross-cultural communication is more important than ever. Institutions like yours, along with support from organizations such as the US Embassy, play a vital role in promoting English language proficiency and fostering understanding between people of different backgrounds. I am confident that the journal will be a valuable resource for scholars, students, and anyone interested in American and British cultures, and I look forward to future issues.

John Silver

Regional English Language Officer
U.S. Mission to Türkiye

Interview (Non-Refereed)

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Beyond the Golden Globes: An Exclusive Interview[1] with Barbaros Tapan

Editor's Note

As a distinguished member of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and a voting member of the Golden Globe Awards, Tapan offers a unique perspective on the global film industry. Beyond his role in awarding prestigious accolades, Tapan's insights into Hollywood's influence extend far beyond the red carpet. His sports and entertainment reporting has been featured in renowned media outlets such as CNN Türk, TRT, and Kanal D.

In 2000, Tapan became the U.S. representative of Türkiye's largest media company, Demiroren Media Group. Currently, he contributes to Hürriyet daily newspaper, produces TV shows for BeIN Media-Turkey, and serves as the U.S. editor of Turkish Airlines' Skylife magazine. Recognized for his exceptional film coverage, Tapan was honored annually from 2018 to 2020 by the Entertainment Journalists Association of Türkiye[2].

In this interview, we delve into Tapan's perspective on Hollywood's impact on global culture, exploring how American cinema has shaped perceptions, values, and narratives worldwide.

[1]This interview with Mr. Barbaros Tapan was conducted remotely between Dr. Kenan Yerli in Türkiye and Mr. Tapan in the USA on November 30, 2024.

[2] For more information about Barbaros Tapan please visit https://goldenglobes.com/board-of-directors/barbaros-tapan/

Beyond the Golden Globes: An Exclusive Interview with Barbaros Tapan

IBAS: As a member of the Golden Globes and the founder and president of the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days, Mr. Tapan what led you to pursue a career in journalism and film criticism?

B.T.: I have always loved film and been passionate about storytelling. Stories have the remarkable ability to connect and inspire people around the world. My enthusiasm for sports and entertainment fuels my creativity, and it led me to pursue a career in journalism, where I could share these passions with others.

IBAS: How did you become interested in the film industry?

B.T.: My journey into the film industry began with my passion for storytelling and its remarkable ability to resonate with people's lives. I observed how movies can unite individuals and spark meaningful conversations, which deeply inspired me. The unique blend of creativity, emotion, and connection captivated and fueled my work. I love how powerful narratives can shape our experiences and influence our feelings.

IBAS: How did you become a Hollywood Foreign Press Association member and a voting member of the Golden Globe Awards?

B.T.: Back then, becoming a Hollywood Foreign Press Association member was no easy feat; it was a long and challenging process. I needed consistent hard work, dedication, and perseverance to become an HFPA member. I had already established myself as a sports and entertainment journalist, but being part of such a prestigious group meant I needed to prove myself continuously. This involved showcasing my expertise, building strong industry relationships, and demonstrating my passion for cinema. Looking back, I realize that the journey was tough but rewarding. Today, being a voting member of the Golden Globe Awards feels special, truly reflecting the years of commitment I've invested in my craft. I hope that people recognize every effort matters, and even with challenges, it can lead to rewarding outcomes.

IBAS: What are some of the most memorable moments of your career as a journalist?

B.T.: Three moments stand out as the most unforgettable in my journalism career! An unforgettable moment for me was when Kobe Bryant won his Oscar. Backstage, surrounded by media from around the world, I had the honor of asking the first question. I asked him, "You have five NBA championships, Olympic gold medals, All-Star MVPs, and now an Oscar—how do you feel?" His response, which went viral and made headlines for days, was that winning the Oscar felt better than winning a championship. That moment is now part of Los Angeles and Oscar history, his answer to my question immortalized on the wall at Hollywood Boulevard, where millions take pictures daily. Being part of that experience fills me with pride.

Second, I had the incredible opportunity to interview Al Pacino. Just being in the same room with him was amazing! I've been a huge fan of his work for as long as I can remember. I've collected his movies and books and watched his performances countless times. Meeting him felt like a dream, and I will always cherish that experience because he has inspired me.

Also, My first one-on-one interview with Kobe Bryant marked the third unforgettable moment in my career. As my favorite athlete, his talent, work ethic, and determination have always inspired me. After each game, a crowd of media eagerly awaits his insights, making it nearly impossible to have a one-on-one conversation with him.

IBAS: What impact do you think awards have on the film industry, both domestically and internationally? Are awards ceremonies still relevant in the era of streaming platforms and digital distribution?

B.T.: Award ceremonies are crucial in shaping the film industry, both in the U.S. and internationally. They provide essential recognition that can elevate careers, boost box office success, and highlight films and television shows that might otherwise go unnoticed. In today's landscape, award ceremonies still remain relevant and impactful. These events offer much more than just three hours of live broadcast. For a week, pre-parties, luncheons, and after-parties create invaluable opportunities for industry professionals to network and celebrate each other's hard work. This collaborative spirit fosters connections and camaraderie that uplifts everyone involved.

Moreover, even in an era where streaming platforms and digital distribution have made content more accessible, award shows are among the few occasions that unite the entire industry. They showcase the full spectrum of show business, including fashion, makeup, jewelry, lavish parties, and media coverage from around the world. This represents Hollywood culture. Show business deserves a showcase, and these ceremonies are that showcase. They serve as a cultural cornerstone for the entertainment industry.

IBAS: What is your perspective on Hollywood's role as a soft power tool in promoting American culture and values? Do you believe Hollywood's influence has grown or decreased in recent years?

B.T.: Hollywood plays a significant role as a soft power tool in promoting American culture and values. Its influence shapes perceptions and ideologies through film, television, and other media. Through its storytelling, Hollywood has established America as a leader in cultural diplomacy. Despite changes in the global landscape, Hollywood's influence remains unmatched. No other country comes close to America's reach and impact in soft power. While emerging markets like South Korea and Bollywood have gained popularity, Hollywood continues to set the standard for storytelling, production quality, and cultural influence.

IBAS: You are the founder and president of the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days. Can you please tell us about this initiative?

B.T.: My wife, Elif Zorlu Tapan, and I founded the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days because we have lived in Los Angeles for over 20 years. During this time, we observed how other countries promote their stories and culture through similar events. Our goal was to showcase the richness of Turkish storytelling and introduce our culture to a global audience.

This event is not just about screening films and TV series; it's a celebration of our community. It provides an opportunity to connect with Americans and individuals from all backgrounds.

Every member of the Turkish-American community acts as a cultural ambassador, promoting our vibrant culture and country. Many guests leave amazed at discovering Turkey's rich community and compelling stories.

This initiative has had a tremendous impact, and our dream is to expand it annually. In our first year, we welcomed incredible guests, including U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and actress Jacqueline Bisset. This year, the Hadid family and the president of the Golden Globes were with us. Hosting such prominent figures demonstrates that our event transcends borders and fosters meaningful cultural exchange and mutual understanding. This initiative is truly a labor of love for my wife and me.

IBAS: How has the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days initiative contributed to the international recognition of Turkish cinema? Do you believe this event will significantly increase the likelihood of Turkish films receiving awards, such as the Golden Globe, in the coming years?

B.T.: The Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days initiative plays a vital role in promoting Turkish cinema internationally. By showcasing Turkish stories in Hollywood and fostering connections among filmmakers, actors, and industry leaders, we effectively break down barriers and highlight Turkey's wealth of talent and creativity. Attendees of our events often leave with a renewed appreciation for the depth and richness of Turkish narratives, further enhancing the global reputation of our cinema.

Initiatives like this can significantly improve the chances of Turkish films receiving prestigious awards in the future. However, we must remain committed to this effort in the long term. South Korea serves as a prime example; their sustained commitment to promoting their stories in Hollywood has led to significant global recognition and numerous awards. In Hollywood's competitive landscape hinges on telling remarkable stories and effective campaigning. To make a lasting impact, we must actively promote our films.

We need to engage with the international film community and consistently build relationships with key industry players to elevate our stories and create a meaningful impact in the film world.

IBAS: What are your future aspirations and goals for your career? Do you see yourself continuing to be involved in the film industry, and if so, in what capacity?

B.T.: Absolutely! Our vision is to elevate the Hollywood Turkish Film and Drama Days into a transformative event, positioning it as a vital platform for cultural exchange and showcasing the incredible stories of Türkiye to the world. My wife and I are passionate advocates for our homeland, and we love promoting and acting as cultural ambassadors who connect Türkiye with a broader audience.

Looking ahead, we also aim to deepen our involvement in the industry by producing films that highlight untold stories from Türkiye. These narratives deserve recognition, and we are committed to bringing them to life.

IBAS: What advice would you give to young filmmakers who aspire to make a global impact? What qualities do you believe are essential for success in the film industry?

B.T.: My advice to young filmmakers is to work hard, stay persistent, and not get discouraged by setbacks. This industry is full of challenges, but every obstacle is an opportunity to learn and grow. Don't stress too much or be too hard on yourself. Filmmaking is a creative journey, and enjoying the process is just as important as the outcome.

Be authentic. Audiences connect with genuine stories, so don't lose your unique voice in the pursuit of trends or commercial success. Think globally, and consider how your story can resonate with a worldwide audience while staying true to your roots.
Lastly, remember that patience and consistency are key. Success doesn't come overnight. Believe in your vision; your work will ultimately find its audience.

IBAS: What is your message to the readers of the *Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal*?

B.T.: Thank you for inviting me. It has been a pleasure sharing my thoughts and experiences with you, and I look forward to meeting you in person soon. I sincerely hope the *Interdisciplinary British and American Studies Journal* will contribute significantly to the field of Anglo-American Studies. Until then, stay creative, trust the process, and believe in the transformative power of stories.

IBAS: Thank you very much, Mr. Tapan, for your insightful responses and valuable perspectives. Your work is truly inspiring, and we are honored to have had this opportunity to engage with you. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Contents

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Research Article

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Remodelling Verbal Synonymy for the History of English: Sources and Methods*

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abstract

A synonymous placement of words in present-day thesauri can be reconstructed to become a relevant object of diachronic onomasiology. In a historical sense present-day synonyms were attested at specified moments in the string's diachrony and at a given succession over time on the imposed condition of inventory sameness. A possible method of studying this problem may lie in the sum total of deductions between the ordinal positions of elements in the contemporary string and its historical counterpart. As English provides a dated diachronic textual prototype for any lexical item in its first attested, as well as other, meaning(s), owing to the textual corpus of the OED, a better fitting model for this task is a vector space model. It distinguishes the *relative* and *absolute* chronologies of diachronically reshuffled present-day strings. The similarity measure between the present-day string and its diachronic permutation then consists in the difference between the lengths of the obtained vectors. These reflect contemporary (fragmentary, or, eventually, all) and the corresponding period, if set so, weight placements of the given constituents. The developed framework allows for data-driven exemplification as well as distributional visualization. The methodology is deemed to be applicable to multiple lexicographic sources of verbal synonymy. The data is combined with the OED-obtained composition of de-verbal families.

Keywords: verbs, de-verbal coinages, synonymous strings, diachronic permutation, similarity

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**This article builds upon and expands upon the findings presented in Bilynskyi, M. (2009). Synonymous Stringing as a Diachronic Reconstruction: The OED Middle English Evidence for Verbs and Deverbal Coinages. ІНОЗЕМНА ФІЛОЛОГІЯ (INOZEMNA PHILOLOGIA), 121, 20-42.*

1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The developed methodology of assessing sequential similarity between present-day strings of synonyms and their historical reconstructions was presented for the first time in my talk given at the Sixth International Conference on Middle English held in Cambridge (Bilynsky 2008). The mathematical side of this methodology, which, we hope is usable for diachronic lexicology, is our development of a simple idea. It was suggested by the renowned quantitative linguist Professor Gabriel Altmann in our personal correspondence and then extended into a more subtle vector space solution described in detail in our co-authored paper (Bilynsky, Pereymybida, Altman 2009).

In the present work, apart from the application issues, I juxtapose the ME and the post-ME sample reconstructions on select variables. A ME reconstruction was presented in an extended version of my post-ICOME 8 paper in 2009. The post-ME evidence analysed along the suggested methodological principles is presented for the first time, as well as some lines of comparison between the set periods and inside select variables modelling.

Multiple thesauri of verbs, which for present-day English are over twenty in the book or online formats (and sometimes in both), have been processed. The present paper, however, focuses more on the methodology of carrying out a particular task than on the epistemology and heuristics of databases which, when combined with the OED earliest quotations, turn into objects of historical lexicology.

Verbs initiate single or multiple synonymous strings depending on their polysemy. For verbs that have more than one meaning the dominant is accompanied with the respective meaning specification. If no such formula is provided by the thesaurus, we can distinguish the strings by their compositions, which typically differ already at the first synonym after the dominant.

In the present framework, the object of our study is a documented string of synonyms. The extents of similarity that it reveals when reshaped into a historical sequence in the reconstruction rely on the recreation of the appearance of its constituents over time.

More complex strings provide a larger quantity of synonyms and less complex ones adduce smaller numbers of synonyms. This property of a string is also traceable diachronically on the premise that its constituents are characterized by a given age. They were molding the string ‘in turn’, and by the produced cumulative effects they were building the string gradually until, after a few intermediate stages, it became what it is like today in the inventory sense.

The string is diachronically representable by its earliest and latest constituents, given that they do not share this status with any other lexeme(s) of identical dating. This is too harsh a condition as same-year attestations of two or even more constituents within a string occasionally occur. Also, present-day strings sometimes reveal coincident historical sequencing.

The suggested modeling takes place as an interaction and mutual enrichment of synonymy dictionaries and historical texts illustrating the respective lemmas in the OED. The dated extracts from the OED are according to Antoinette Renouf “chronologically held texts” (2007, 37). The bank of these earliest quotations (precedent usage texts) constitutes a diachronic textual corpus (Hoffmann 2004; Alexander and Dallachy 2020, 182). We have used the 3rd version of the 2nd CD- ROM edition of the OED (Proffitt 2018).

The architecture of our queries allows for the updating of data in line with the ongoing OED3 editing. The lexemes from all the queries are provided with the date labels that stand for the corresponding OED earliest quotations.

The union of the OED evidence of diachronic textual prototypes of words in their meanings, even senses, and a fabric of synonymy according to *Roget's Thesaurus* was achieved in the *Historical Thesaurus of English*, 2010 (cf. Kay and Wotherspoon 2002) that is now being integrated into OED3.

Our inventory framework also entails strings data contained in *Roget's Thesaurus*. It includes a number of other dictionaries of synonyms as well. Altogether we can speak of an extended (but, also, partitioned) base of approximately 100,000 strings of synonymous verbs and over half a million of strings of their shared-root coinages. For present-day criteria of representativeness and validation in lexicography and corpus linguistics cf., for instance, de Schryver (2003) and de Schryver et al. (2023).

The diachronically reshuffled string starts the first lexeme and continues (sometimes instantaneously) into a rise of a precedent diachronic pair that is taken for the prototype of the respective string. Then such a pair was complemented by at least one, or possibly more words until the entire composition of the string was attested historically.

The exemplification of the queries and distribution visualizations are data-driven from the framework.

The framework can be used for studying the evolution of present-day synonymous strings over time. It can be also split for more specific tasks of select variables reconstruction.

2. RECONSTRUCTING PERIOD THESAURI OF VERBAL SYNONYMS

The formation of the string is traceable by the first and the last elements of its composition. The string is understood as at least one additional element added to a pair of synonyms. The attestation of the initial and concluding lags of the string relevant for a specific period is determined by the respective chronological boundaries.

Alongside of the notion of a synonymous string for period reconstruction we may also need the notion of a synonymous sub-string. Sometimes strings figure alongside of sub-strings. Hence a handy notation appears as a (sub-)string. The situation resembles that with synonyms, near-synonyms and (near-)synonymy. The first element of the string or its prototypical pair in the ME thesaurus could be dated with the start of the ME period. Significantly, a lot of stringing of elements revealed on the basis of the OED earliest attestations during the ME period has the first element of the string, its prototypical pair or even a larger portion of the composition inside the OE records attested before the 12th c.

Thus, in some cases the ME thesaurus contained only the elements dated in ME, but in others they were dated in both ME and OE, and in some cases the OE elements had no ME extensions, but were there in the ME texts as could be seen from the OED attestations after their diachronic textual prototypes.

Hence the respective ME chronological layer in the historical thesaurus refers to ME stringing alone, ME stringing and an OE element, a ME element after OE stringing, a ME element after a

single OE element, or even OE stringing that was not continued in ME, but could, although not necessarily, be continued in post-ME.

The chronological compositions of synonyms relevant for the ME cross-section of the thesaurus were the very strings from the entire thesaurus or segments of these strings, i.e., sub-strings, with a possible, pre-ME recovery or/and post-ME complementation.

The post-ME cross-section of the thesaurus contains the elements registered after 1500. Understandably, some of them were the strings registered for the whole thesaurus while most were its (sub-)strings initiated during the (OE+)ME cross-section.

Following the above assumptions a thesaurus is split into the age wise extreme values elements corresponding to the chronological confines of the period of language history and the element(s) inside these confines. At the same time a period string may be a real string from the thesaurus. Conversely, the contents of a real string from the thesaurus may belong to more than one chronological period.

The dimensional organization of strings exhibits adaptability to both exact measurements and range parameters regarding the quantity of constituents. The temporal boundaries of each string are established through OED's chronological documentation, identifying its earliest and most recent constituent(s). Within the sophisticated electronic interface, temporal parameters can be configured independently, either as specific chronological points or extended periods within the textual sequence.

Navigation through historical strings within the compiled corpus is maintained via contemporary reference points. The system framework generates comprehensive age-set classifications and string listings, with variable length specifications, complementing the completely reorganized historical thesaurus.

Analysis of contemporary strings within the ME thesaurus reveals two distinct patterns. The first scenario presents no constituents of subsequent temporal classification within the present-day string, resulting in identical string compositions across both the comprehensive historical thesaurus and its ME component. The alternative scenario involves certain constituent(s) in the string from the broader collection dating beyond 1500, while maintaining a minimum of two constituents documented prior to 1500, forming the ME *sub-string*.

The sign '⊂' functions as a demarcation symbol, distinguishing the string's dominant from its other compositional elements: e.g. ***revere*** *'⊂'. venerate, regard, respect*. When there is a floating dominant in the historical reconstruction this sign will appear inside the string.

The general set encompasses 1,198 strings that align with the ME reconstruction. Notably, 422 strings, comprising approximately one-third of the total, maintain identical lexemes in both the present-day dominant position and the string's earliest constituent. To denote this characteristic, we employ specific notational conventions: an asterisk (*) indicating historical reconstruction and brackets ([]) signifying conditional present-day symbols * ⊂ [⊂], both appearing after the string's dominant. When the dominant remains consistent across both versions of the string, it is classified as historically *intact.*

The strings exhibit two primary classifications: those with historically *intact* dominants and those with *floating* dominants. Their constituents demonstrate correlation patterns with specific historical periods in the OED textual prototypes. The distribution is as follows:

• ME correlation: 163 strings with *intact* dominants and 308 with *floating* dominants, as exemplified in (1) and (2)
• Exclusive OE correlation: A smaller subset of 15 strings with *intact* dominants and 17 with *floating* dominants, as shown in (3) and (4)
• Combined OE and ME correlation: 229 strings with *intact* dominants and 466 with *floating* dominants, as illustrated in (5) and (6)

> (1) ME strings of verbs containing ME textual prototypes with the diachronically intact dominant, e.g. ***conjure*** *(1290) * ⊂ [⊂] [To appeal to] entreat (1340), adjure (1382), implore (1500)*
> (2) ME strings of verbs containing ME textual prototypes with the diachronically floating dominant, e.g. ***amend*** *(1220) * ⊂ redress (1325), reform (1340), rectify [⊂] (1400)*
> (3) ME strings of verbs containing OE textual prototypes with the diachronically intact dominant, e.g. ***spare*** *(825) *⊂ [⊂] forbear (888), forgive (900)*
> (4) ME strings of verbs containing OE textual prototypes with the diachronically floating dominant, e.g. ***arise*** *(825) * ⊂ stir (888), awake [⊂] (1000)*
> (5) ME strings of verbs containing OE and ME textual prototypes with the diachronically intact dominant, e.g. ***sail*** *(893) *⊂ [⊂] [To fly] glide (1000), float (1100), soar (1374), skim (1420)*
> (6) ME strings of verbs containing OE and ME textual prototypes with the diachronically floating dominant, e.g. ***arise*** *(825) *⊂ uprise (1300), mount [⊂] (1362), ascend (1382)* (Bilynsky, 2009).

A substantial part of ME verbal synonymy contains sub-strings from the general set series, the latter entailing one or more constituents dated after the expiry of the ME period (post-1500 earliest quotations). The selection of almost 5,000 strings drawn here from *Webster's New World Thesaurus* (the synonymy from other thesauri can be subjected to the same treatment) split virtually to equal measure (2,339 and 2,495 ME (sub-)strings initiated, respectively, by OE-ME and ME elements).

The same headword in a contemporary string and in its historical reconstruction solidifies the perception of a lexical group whose present-day and historical ontologies may differ only as regards the constituents placements 'held together' by the headword. This holds true for a mere one fifth of the set groups, respectively, around 500 examples started by the OE (e.g. under 7 and 7.1) or a ME (e.g. under 8) headword. In the remainder of the strings the reshuffling affected the present-day dominant.

The quotas with the diachronically intact headword rest on barely 20 per cent of the selection in (7), (7.1) and (8). Also cf. fig, 2 and 3 in the next section.

Change of the headword during a historical reshuffling of the string elements is more common for ME sub-strings (with chronologically extending elements outside the period), as in e.g. (9/9.1) and (10), rather than for ME strings (where all elements stay within the time confines of ME). Likewise, the sub-sets with the constituents with the OE earliest quotations as well as both ME and post-ME elements, as in e.g. (7.1) and (9.1), were more common than those with just post-ME complementation and no additions during the ME period, as in e.g. (7) and (9):

(7) ME sub-strings of verbs containing OE (and eventually post-ME) textual prototypes with the diachronically intact dominant, e.g. ***grow*** *(725) *⊂ [⊂] [To begin] arise (825), start (1000),* originate (1653)

(7.1) ME sub-strings of verbs containing OE, ME (and eventually post-ME) textual prototypes with the diachronically intact dominant, e.g. ***bow*** *(893) *⊂ [⊂] [To submit] bend (1000), surrender (1466), capitulate (1580), acquiesce (1620)*

(8) ME sub-strings of verbs containing ME (and eventually post-ME) textual prototypes with the diachronically intact dominant, e.g. ***approach*** *(1305) *⊂ [⊂] [To approach personally] propose (1340), address (1374), corner (1387), request (1533), accost (1578), button-hole (1828)*

(9) ME sub-strings of verbs containing OE (and eventually post-ME) textual prototypes with the diachronically floating dominant, e.g. ***wet*** *(825) *⊂ overflow [⊂] (893), water (897), inundate (1623)*

(9.1) ME sub-strings of verbs containing OE, ME (and eventually post-ME) textual prototypes with the diachronically floating dominant, e.g. ***crave*** *(1000) *⊂ want [⊂] (1200), covet (1225), require (1375), aspire (1460), fancy (1545)*

(10) ME sub-strings of verbs containing ME (and eventually post-ME) textual prototypes with the diachronically floating dominant, e.g. ***glare*** *(1250) *⊂ pout (1325), scowl (1340), frown [⊂] (1386), gloom (1399), glower (1500), lower (1606), grimace (1762), sulk (1781)*

Post-ME complementation of a ME sub-string fell on varied lengths: e.g. ***swing*** *(725) *⊂ [⊂] wield (825), wave (1000), whirl (1290), flourish (1300), brandish (1325), twirl (1598)* vs. ***cackle*** *(1225) *⊂ [⊂] cluck (1481), giggle (1509), gabble (1577), chuckle (1598), quack (1617), titter (1619), snicker (1694), snigger (1706)* (Bilynsky, 2009).

The inventory of the present-day synonymous strings typically contains elements of older (before 1500) vocabulary. Curiously, only about two hundred strings in Webster's New World Dictionary, which is quite an insignificant number, consist of lexemes with the earliest attestations after the end of the ME period (11). A much higher number of post-ME sub-strings (almost nine hundred) are anchored by one element attested before 1500 (12).

(11) Post-ME strings containing only after-1500 diachronic textual prototypes, e.g. ***annihilate*** ⊂ *demolish, exterminate, obliterate;* ***picket*** ⊂ *[To strike] blockade, boycott;* ***lampoon*** ⊂ *satirize, caricature, parody.*

(12) Post-ME sub-strings anchored in ME by one pre-1500 constituent, e.g. ***stylize*** ⊂ *conventionalize, formalize, accord (1123);* ***dishearten*** ⊂ *dampen, dismay (1297);* ***bustle*** *(1362)* ⊂ *hasten, hustle;* ***embitter*** ⊂ *acidulate, sour (1340);* ***quibble*** ⊂ *dodge, avoid (1300);* ***sidle*** ⊂ *veer, tilt (1399);* ***hypnotize*** ⊂ *mesmerize, entrance, stupefy, drug, narcotize, soothe (950), psychologize, anaesthetize* (Bilynsky, 2009).

Other contributions to the post-ME reconstructions of the thesaurus came from strings that contained at least two elements dated before 1500 and two or more elements falling on the post-ME period.

Within the general set, a subset of 4,902 strings exhibits multiple constituents (specifically, two or more) with textual prototypes that have documented evidence predating 1500.

Post-ME additions to ME sub-strings could take up diverse composition quotas, which fell short of the ME composition or exceeded it, cf. e.g.

swing *(725) *⊂ [⊂] wield (825), wave (1000), whirl (1290), flourish (1300), brandish (1325), twirl (1598)* and ***cackle*** *(1225) *⊂ [⊂] cluck (1481), giggle (1509), gabble (1577), chuckle (1598), quack (1617), titter (1619), snicker (1694), snigger (1706)* (Bilynsky, 2009).

A single string constituent with the OE or ME textual prototype could be complemented with (a) post-ME constituent(s). This situation pertains to cases with the unchanged or reshuffled present-day headword, e.g.

> ***bury*** *(1000) *⊂ [⊂] entomb (1576), enshrine (1583), inhume (1616), mummify (1628);* ***shun*** *(950) *⊂[⊂] evade (1513), neglect (1529), dodge (1568), ignore (1611) vs.* ***shout*** *(1374) * ⊂ exclaim[⊂] (1570), blurt (1573), ejaculate (1578), assert (1604), vociferate (1623), emit (1626);* ***blast*** *(1300) *⊂ shell (1562), bombard (1598), bomb [⊂] (1688), torpedo (1771), raid (1865), napalm (1950)* (Bilynsky 2009).

In the period recovery of such elements their relevance pertains only to post-ME reconstructions .

The chronological attestation of a lexeme serving as the present-day dominant in a string might occur after 1500, despite the existence of either an associated sub-string or, in certain instances, a solitary constituent whose documented evidence extends before 1500:

> e.g. ***exchange*** *(1300) *⊆ interchange (1374), relieve (1374), substitute (1532), alternate [⊂] (1595)* vs. ***copy*** *(1387) *⊂ illustrate (1526), film (1602), reproduce (1611), photograph [⊂] (1839), snap-shot (1894), microfilm (1940)* (Bilynsky 2009).

The historical restructuring process involves replacing the present-day dominant with its historically earliest counterpart, as determined by textual prototype dating. The lexeme in question may simultaneously serve as the dominant in separate string(s) where it maintains chronological precedence over all other constituents. This systematic arrangement results in the formation of string clusters within the historical thesaurus, with each cluster anchored by its temporally primary constituent.

> e.g. ***glare*** *(1250) * ⊂ [⊂] pierce (1297), menace (1303), scowl (1340), goggle (1380), gaze (1386), fix (1489), glower (1500) vs.* ***glare*** *(1250) * ⊂ glitter (1399), beam [⊂] (1430);* ***glare*** *(1250) * ⊂ pout (1325), scowl (1340), frown [⊂] (1386), gloom (1399), glower (1500);* ***glare*** *(1250) * ⊂ scowl (1340), glower [⊂] (1500)* (Bilynsky 2009).

3. COMPARING MODERN-DAY SYNONYM STRUCTURES WITH THEIR HISTORICAL COUNTERPARTS

Permutation, defined as the systematic reordering of elements within a complete system, emerges as a valuable analytical framework for examining the diachronic development of synonymy.

The prerequisites for the study of permutation in reconstructive synonymy is a change of ordinal placements of constituents and a difference in the dates of their OED textual prototypes.

The consequence of the reshuffling of a diachronic remake of a synonymous sequence of lexemes can rest on the assessment of each constituent's weight in the string's contemporary and historical headword.

Within the string's present-day dominant, the weight value (*wi*) of each constituent is calculated using a mathematical formalism that considers two key variables: the constituent's ordinal placement (*i*) and the comprehensive string length (*n*) set by the following formalism:

$$w_i = \frac{n - i + 1}{n} \quad (1)$$

A string of synonyms may be represented as a vector $\{i\}_{i=1}^{n}$ with its magnitude determined by the cumulative sum of weight factors across all constituents $\{w_i\}_{i=1}^{n}$.

In the sequence based analyses we have a succession of the dated OED quotations of the constituents $\{j_i\}_{i=1}^{n}$ or their ordinal positions within the historical string $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^{n}$, including one shared position for adjacent constituents dated identically.

The weight formalism for the relative chronological scale (2) is $\left\{\overline{w}_j = \frac{n - j_i + 1}{n}\right\}$

whereas that for the absolute one (3) is $= \frac{y_i - y_{\min}}{y_{\max} - y_{\min}}\left(\frac{1}{n+1} - 1\right) + 1$

"Then both contemporary and diachronic versions of the string can be presented in terms of lengths of the respective vectors. The difference between the two vectors is taken as permutation factor which is a measure of correspondence between the contemporary string and its historical counterpart" (Bilynsky, Pereymtbida, Altmann 2008).

$$\left\|\overrightarrow{w} - \overrightarrow{w^{(y)}}\right\|^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{n}\left(w_i - w_i^{(y)}\right)^2 \quad (4)$$

When constituents maintain equivalent ordinal positions in both historical (relative chronology) and contemporary strings, a perfect alignment occurs between contemporary weight factor values and relative historical weight factor values, resulting in a permutation factor of 0. For absolute historical weight factor values to satisfy this condition, the age differential must remain constant between each consecutive pair of constituents within the string - a circumstance that rarely manifests in practice.

Hence, formalism (3) should give more precise values in an uneven distribution than formalism (2). In both (2) and (3) the oldest lexeme will have the historical weight =1. The words that have this characteristic close to the oldest word will have the weight value nearing 1. Younger words will have this value closer to 0.

Formalism (3) is also more responsive in the treatment of same-year OED textual prototypes that fall on the first or, more often, subsequent positions in a chronological reshuffling of some strings, e.g.

> ***shimmer*** *(1100) *⊂ sparkle (1200), blink [⊂] (1300), glimmer (1399), glitter (1399);* ***lean*** *(950) *⊂ dip (975), shift (1000), turn (1000), sway (1399), tilt[⊂](1399), tip (1399).*

Identically dated textual prototypes may fall on the oldest string constituents: e.g.

> ***handle*** *(1000) *⊂ settle (1000), receive (1300), manage (1561), collect [⊂](1573);* ***ferry*** *(1000) *⊂ pull (1000), tow [⊂] (1000), tug (1225), lug (1375), drag (1440)* (Bilynsky 2009).

Strings with more constituents are more likely to have the same-year textual prototypes than shorter strings. For this reason as well as due to denser chronological constituent placements in longer strings formalism (3) appears more sensitive than formalism (2).

"The permutation factor can be calculated for each synonymous string that is subjected to a diachronic reconstruction on the basis of the OED textual prototypes of its constituents. The strings tend to group on the strength of this value" (Bilynsky 2009). Individual permutation factor values upon a query to the framework give access to all available examples.

The permutation factor quantifies the diachronic reshaping of the present-day synonymy of a lexeme. In principle, a period selection contains a portion of strings which are not complemented by any elements that are younger or/and older than the set chronological affiliation. At the same time a period selection has a portion of sequences which are sub-strings from the point of view of the overall thesaurus. Such sequences are complemented outside the confines of chronology set for period synonymy.

The graphs for the chronological layers of evidence are based on the insufficiently described notion of the (sub-)strings of synonyms that are obtainable in their diverse variant lengths and chronological affiliation expression.

In the charts shown on the horizontal axes are the adjustably split internals of values of the permutation factor of the present-day string's constituents and their historical reflexes with regard to the numbers of the attested cases of synonymous (sub-)strings shown on the vertical axes (fig. 1 and, also, fig. 2-4 below). We start with the overall assessment of strings without separating the cases of the diachronically intact and historically floating dominants.

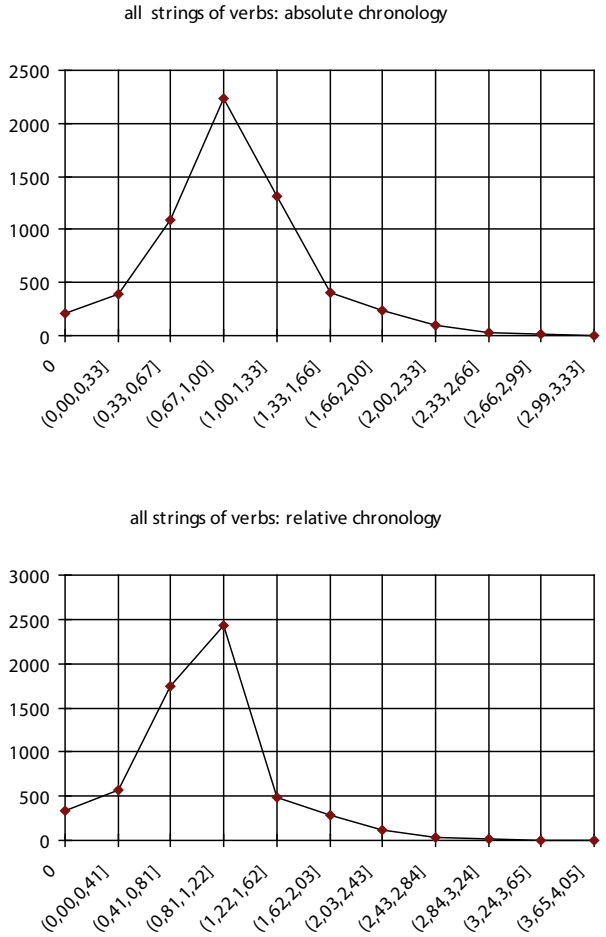

Figure 1. Distribution of the permutation factor values in synonymous strings of verbs: axes x – range of the vectors differential values established according to (3) on the upper chart and according to (2) on the lower chart; axes y – the numbers of relevant examples (same axes notifications on fig 2-4 below)

Absolute chronology is more precise than relative chronology at large that is seen by a flatter curve on the upper chart and subsequently better representation of individual permutation factor values.

The threshold between short and long strings may run at the numeric value of the so-called depth hypothesis that is also known as the Miller-Yngwe hypothesis (Hutchins 2012; cf., also Saaty, Özdemir 2003). It postulates the length of the optimally stored lexical group at seven plus or minus two words. The lower threshold of this interval of lengths forms a border line between shorter and numerically predominant (in the one used for examples for the present study, but not necessarily all thesauri) strings of four lexemes as opposed to longer strings.

The developed framework allows to run queries for smaller segments than the Miller-Yngve depth hypothesis and even for individual lengths of the strings. The obtainable curvatures can be both predictable and unexpected depending on different sets of inventory, chronological or/and etymological variables.

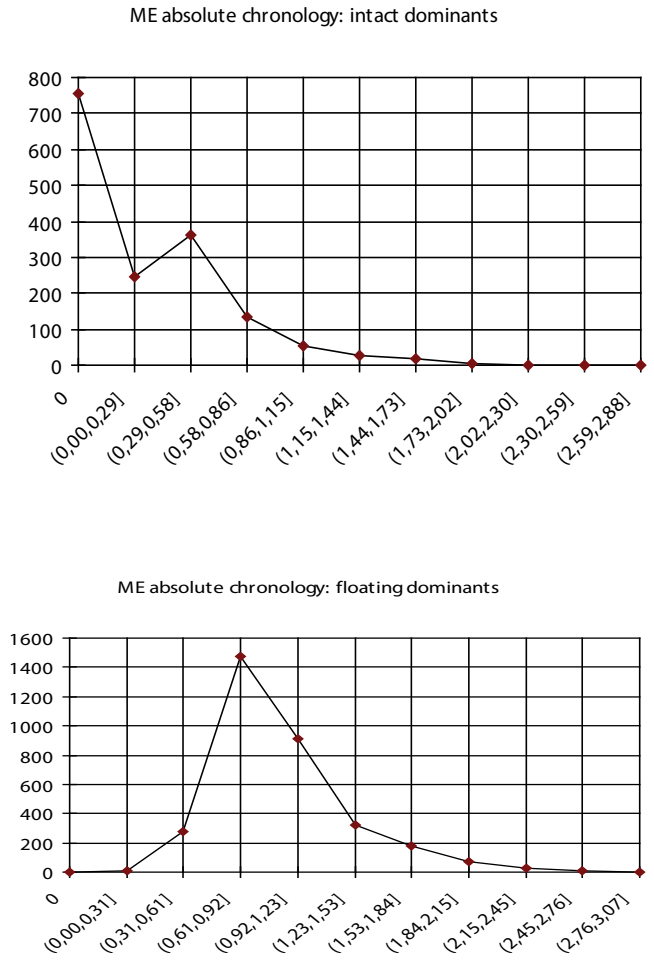

Figure 2. Distribution of the permutation factor values in ME synonymy of verbs: upper chart – coincidence in present-day and historical headwords; lower chart – floating headwords (axes notifications as on fig.1)

The charts for the ME (sub-)strings could be found in my previous work (Bilynsky 2009). The charts for the post-ME (sub-)strings have been drawn on the same variables for the present paper. The reflexes of contemporary synonymy to ME synonymy numerically surpass those to post-ME synonymy. In both examined chronological layers shorter strings outnumbered longer ones.

Better representation of the intervals of the said values is characteristic of contemporary synonymy reflected in ME rather than after ME. Longer strings tended to reveal larger values of dissimilarity in the present-day and historical sequencing of constituents than shorter strings. Absolute chronology is more informative than relative chronology at large, but not so much with regard to longer strings In shorter synonymous strings there are more apparent distribution differences in the permutation factor values established while using relative chronology data, especially in the left hand-side part of the obtained curves. In the overall distribution of the permutation factor values medium-range ones prevail over extreme values with some differences between shorter and longer strings that might serve as orientation in a study of strings composition over time (cf., also, fig. 2 and 3).

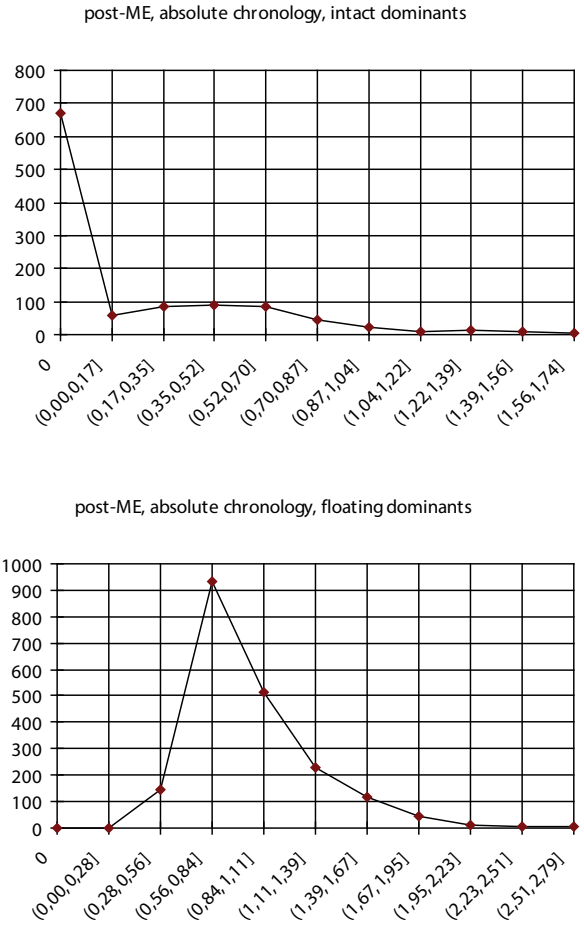

Figure 3. Distribution of the permutation factor values in post-ME synonymy of verbs: upper chart – coincidence in present-day and historical headwords; lower chart – floating headwords (axes notifications as on fig.1)

The conducted research seems to be in line with the quantitative turn and statistics as the new normal in present-day linguistic analysis (Buschfeld et al. 2024). This quantitative linguistics context holds true for research on historical reconstructions as well. Its heuristic value lies in the feasibility to make predictions.

This appears to be the case with regards to the suggested tools of analysis for the study of reconstructed lexical relatedness making use of the information side of relative and absolute chronology of the attestation of lexemes in two kinds of vector spaces for the study of language change .over time. Our prediction also lies in the applicability of the framework to diachronic reconstructions of relatedness of de-verbal lexemes modified by derivational constraints as well as diverse stratifications of the entire (de-)verbal database in all the available lexicographic versions and corpora backgrounds as a potential Large Language Model.

The framework can model arbitrary chronological layers of verbal or de-verbal thesauri against a set of diverse variables in selections of arbitrary or justified lengths of strings and de-verbal coinages (cf. sampling fig. 4 and 5) .

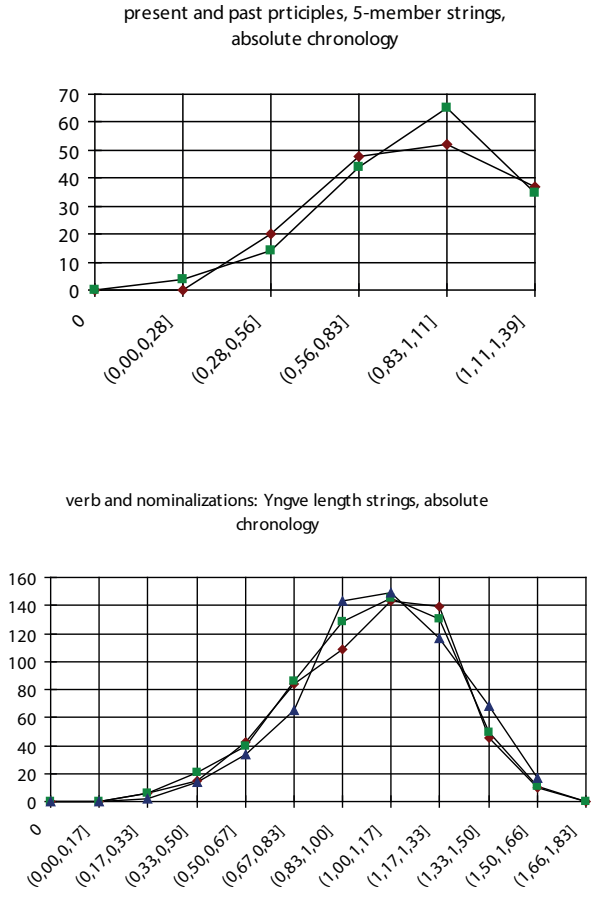

Figure 4. Sample queries for the distribution of the permutation factor values from inventory reconstructions of present-day synonymy over time. Upper chart: Five-member strings, rhombus – present participles, square – past participle. Lower chart: Five-to-nine member strings; rhombus – verbs, square – process nominalizations; triangle – lexicalized nominalizations (axes notifications as on fig.1)

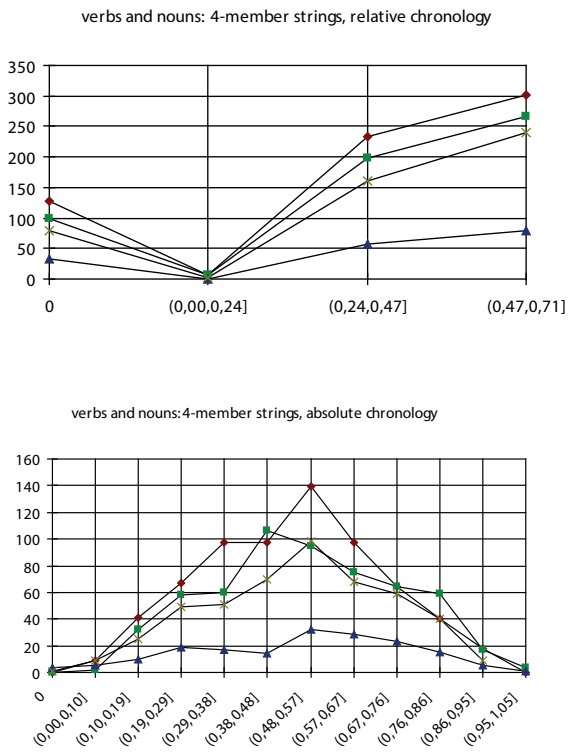

Figure.5. Heuristics of chronology modes in temporal permutations of present-day four-member strings: rhombus – verbs, square – nominalizations, triangle – lexicalized nominalizations; cross – agent nouns (axes notifications as on fig.1)

The present framework provides more 'thesaural fodder' for the 'subsistence' of de-verbal morphology in the lexicon. In the future, it may also narrow the gap between the distributional foci on the collected evidence and evidence-based word group analyses.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The developed framework allows for data-driven exemplification/curve visualization of the said reconstruction for lengths of strings tested against the composition of the present-day English synonymy according to *Webster's New World Thesaurus*. The procedure is extendible to any of the processed thesauri for English, or their combination(s), and two chronological cross-sections in (OE+)ME and post-ME (de-)verbal (near-)synonymy postulating relevant (dis)similarities between the diachronically permutated and contemporary sequential placements of string constituents. The imposed condition of inventory sameness can be checked with the principle of attested composition in lexicographic sources where synonymy for de-verbal coinages is attested.

Our approach is a result of the fruitful discussion we were privileged to have with the late Professor Altman on the possibilities of lexical reconstructions for the study of synonymy over time (Bilynsky, Pereymybida, Altmann 2009). In fact, the current vector space model was prompted by his ingenious idea concerning the use of the permutation principle in reconstructions of synonymy which could be made informative by the sum total of the differences between the ordinal positions of elements in contemporary and historical sequences, even on limited evidence. This seems to be an unmentioned context (cf. Köhler, Kelih 2021) of his many-sided legacy.

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Review Article

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Culture as a Mirror: Reflections of a Career TESOL Instructor

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abstract

In "Culture as a Mirror: Reflections of a Career TESOL Instructor," the author explores the complex nature of culture through personal anecdotes and metaphors. Acknowledging the difficulty of defining culture, images like enigmas, icebergs, webs, and soups are employed to illustrate its multifaceted character. Drawing from experiences in diverse cultures around the globe, the author reflects on how these encounters have shaped his understanding and instructional practices of "teaching culture." This essay discusses the challenges of teaching intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in the TESOL classroom, referencing scholars like Michael Byram and Clifford Geertz to highlight both the possibilities and limitations of such efforts. In a rhizomatic move, the essay examines contradictions within American culture, particularly the ideals of freedom juxtaposed with the history of slavery, using historical accounts from figures like J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur and Charles Dickens. Ultimately, the author concludes that while fully grasping another culture may be unattainable, embracing metaphors is an essential step in fostering cultural awareness.

Keywords: American culture, Michael Byram, Clifford Geertz, Crèvecœur, Dickens

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A Note to the Reader

When posed with the question, what is culture? I can only give my honest response, which is: I don't know what culture is. There are many scholars who have come up with some wonderful and reasonable answers to that question, so if you are looking for a textbook definition for your research paper, then I will refer you to them. Or, like the joke my dear old dad used to tell: An angry citizen upset about some regulation walked into the government office and demanded, "I want to talk to someone with a little authority." The doorman promptly replied, "Well then talk to me. I have as little authority as anyone!"

Culture is one of those topics that lends itself well to metaphor. Despite not knowing anything about culture, you're going to hear me say (read me write?), "Culture is blah-blah-blah." Insert any number of metaphors for the blah-blah-blah. I will write shortly about how confusing culture can be. If you're like me and you ever get into those big, fat hard-to-read papers or books on the topic, you're going to eventually say, why is this so confusing? Since I can't answer (with any authority) what culture is, allow me to suggest a reason why it is so confusing: Culture is so confusing because it lives in a different medium than our logical mind, similar to the way the dream lives in the night in our sleep, and to bring the dream into the day world is as futile an endeavor that anyone has ever ventured upon. Just like culture, there are scholars of the dream, but in the end their explanations, erudite though they may be, are merely postulations. And that's fine; as people who are obsessed with things such as culture and dreams, we need to be okay with postulations.

As dream lives in the realm of night and sleep, culture lives in the realm of metaphor. (Yes, yes, I know: Isn't dream also metaphor? For sure. The house of metaphor is large.) And the nature of metaphor—to quote an extremely smart scholar of metaphor— "…is to release the imagination by paralyzing discursive reason" (Intellectual Deep Web, 2019, 4:56). Discursive reason is to metaphor what the daylight is to the dream. For example, there is a bridge in a city I lived in in Vietnam. It's a tall, long bridge spanning a river, and the local Vietnamese are fearful to cross at night because it is haunted. Two times I remember I had to cross this bridge in the dark with a local friend, and both times he would draw near to me and take my arm, and we would go together holding on to each other as he whispered, "Maa, maa…" (Ghost, ghost…). It was indeed a tragic bridge, a place where heartbroken lovers or bankrupt businessmen were known to throw themselves to their deaths on the shallow rocks far below, and it was thought the ghosts of past suicides could grab you and pull you over. There was no reasoning him out of his belief in the ghosts. The animistic culture in that area of Vietnam where I lived sees the spirit world and the "real" world mixed like honey into warm milk. The burden of acceptance was on me.

We have an idiom in English about seeing the world through rose-colored glasses, meaning when you wear these glasses you are always seeing the optimist even in bad circumstances. Likewise - and this is always my lesson to my students when I am called to teach a thing or two about culture - when looking at culture we must put on our metaphor-colored glasses so that we can disable our discursive reasoning and unleash the power of our imaginations.

Vientiane, Laos

As I draft this paper, it is hot. The front of my shirt is soaked with sweat. A droplet runs down my forehead into the corner of my eye and stings, causing me to pick up the sweat-damp napkin and dab. It's summer, the middle of the rainy season. I'm in a small dining area of one of the ubiquitous boutique hotels. The desk clerk across the room looks concerned at me. She has already turned on the overhead fan, which makes a soft squeak every dozen or so revolutions. Short of fixing the broken air conditioner, there's nothing she can do. My Scandinavian blood boils in this tropical heat. I don't speak Lao, and she doesn't speak English, otherwise, I would explain with an embarrassed laugh that this high-mountain Montana boy is not used to her climate. There will be no acclimation in a few months; my perspiration is a thousand years in the making. Somewhere in the expanse of culture studies there must be a paper on how temperature and humidity affect culture; from sarongs to mukluks, it goes without saying that geography and its various climate zones are important ingredients in the cultural recipe.

1. WHAT IS CULTURE? PART 1

Culture is an enigma—it's mysterious and obscure; it's a puzzle—it requires thought until suddenly a piece fits and you get a sense of a larger picture yet full of gaps; it's a paradox—it exudes truth while being contradictory and absurd; it's a trap—it's inescapable, snagging you by surprise; it's a labyrinth—its complex network of passages leads you to dead ends, stunning panoramas, and back-arounds; it's a chimera—its illusions are like a glittering mirage that lures you out of your comfort zone; it's a web—and you are the fly caught up in threads connected to past and future while being eternally present; it's a soup—flavored by a history and multiplicity of ingredients; it's an iceberg—what you can see with your senses only means that beneath you is a vastness you do not know and probably cannot know; it's an amalgam—it is at once real and unreal, concrete and abstract, within you and all around you, and you can know it only by its traces, its echoes, its lingering smells, its artifacts, of which you are one, the only species on the planet driven to create mirrors in which to reflect.

I will not attempt in this paper to expand the field of culture studies, forge new research, create a novel ethnographic technique, nor follow an old one. However, due to my career as an itinerant English teacher, culture is a hydra that I encounter again and again, with a plea or mandate from my institution to please teach it! There have been, literally, hundreds of books and thousands of articles written about culture, and in my field, without fail, every TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) conference I have attended has had multiple presentations on the importance of teaching (or how to teach) culture or ICC (Intercultural Communicative Competence). During engagements with students, I'm invariably asked to expound upon a cultural aspect from my native land ("Does every American have a gun?" "Why is America so violent?" "What's wrong with saying the N-word?" "Why do Americans do this or that?"), or I'm asked to answer the impossible question: What is an American? When this happens, I stutter to a stop while I dig for a plausible explanation and always an inadequate definition. I've yet to find them. I remember more than twenty years ago, a friend from France said to me: "America is a land of contradictions. You're all very prude about sex, yet your media is full of hypersexualized messages. You talk of being a peaceful force in the world, yet your gun-violence at home is off the charts, and you're always at

[1] Early on, I will make the distinction between what I term culture studies and "cultural studies." Despite intersecting now and then, cultural studies often have a goal of activism, whereas culture studies, as I see them, usually have no such inclination.

war!" Yes, these incongruencies puzzle me too! But, to varying degrees, cannot the same observation of hypocrisy be applied to any country and culture?

1.1. Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence

Since Michael Byram published his influential book, *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*, it has been en vogue, some may say crucial, to have an element of Intercultural Communicative Competence as part of the language classroom's curriculum. To this, I wholeheartedly agree. In his work, Byram (2021, 28) argues that through ICC we might overcome the tourist's objectification of a culture different from our own and strive for the sojourner's perspective of compatibility, harmony, and consciousness. But, like many of my colleagues, I am conflicted, if not confused, about how to go about this. Byram suggested that language "[l]earners become ethnographers rather than applied linguists"(40). It is this aspiration that I think should inform the practice of foreign language teachers when teaching, talking, writing, or thinking about culture.

1.2. Flashback: The Saint John Valley, and then France, 2001

I had been living in Fort Kent, Maine for the past seven months in an attempt to perfect my French—the language had infected me for no other reason than I found it extremely beautiful. Fort Kent, like the other Acadian towns cradled in the Saint John Valley, despite being American, was perfectly bilingual. The villagers habitually begin a sentence with English and finish it with French, or the other way around, or sometimes they just speak French. Sometimes young children speak, not knowing which language they are using. Culturally, at that time, probably still today, it was as far removed from my native Montana as possible while still existing in the lower 48.

The valley is separated from Canada by the St. John River. Back then, my companions and I would cross the international bridge on Sundays for brunch at the Maple Leaf Restaurant in Claire, New Brunswick—at a mere three bucks and some change, we felt like we were gaming the system at the all-you-can-eat buffet. It's been years, but to this day I can still remember the small, buckwheat pancakes called ployes, a local cuisine, on which you spread a pork pâté or drench it with butter and maple syrup. Buckwheat and not wheat flour because of the short growing season so far north, and the syrup harvested from the valley's own maple trees. Each summer, Fort Kent holds the Ploye Festival, during which a giant ploye measuring twelve feet in diameter is cooked over a massive bed of coals and then broken apart and eaten communally (ployes.com). People from local villages on both sides of the river join in the festivities.

Les Trois Bons Dieux (The three good gods), or as Shakespeare wrote in the *Twelfth Night*, "If music be the food of love, play on;"(2004, 1:1) music, food, and love are the languageless portals to deep culture, for even if you don't speak a single word of the dialect, these three gods will ferry you to a profound, communal experience of wordless laughter—for laughter, aside from death, is the universal translator, the great leveling agent.[3]

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[2] Byram 2021, 40. I.e. adopt the attitude of the sojourner instead of the tourist.

[3] I'm thinking of the laughter as expressed by Mikhail Bakhtin: "Not only does laughter [Medieval laughter] make no exception from the upper stratum, but indeed it is directed toward it. Furthermore, it is directed not at one part only, but at the whole. One might say that it builds its own world versus the official world, its own church versus the official church, its own state versus the official state. Laughter celebrates its masses, professes its faith, celebrates marriages and funerals, writes its epitaphs, elects kings and bishops. . . The acute awareness of victory over fear is an essential element of medieval laughter." M. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helen Iswolsky, First Midland Book Edition (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 88 - 91.

Before September 11, 2001, crossing the international bridge from America into Canada was as simple as walking to the grocery store. "Where ya goin' today?" the border guard would say in either English or French. "Just goin' to eat some breakfast," we would say, and the guard would wave us through with a kind word of "Bon appétit!" After the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York, a wall came down, severing the communities; it remains in place as of the writing of this essay.

That December, after final exams, I stole a semester off university and flew to France to learn the "real French," or so I naively thought. This is what my valley friends would sometimes say, "the real French." In the valley, there can exist a sense of inadequacy about their French compared to the French of the outside world. Even I thought, naively, that I might be picking up some bad habits, certainly some local curse words. To this day, I still utter the T-word when I stub my toe (Tabernacle in English; I shan't say it in French for it is taboo.). I nostalgically pray that the language and culture of the Saint John Valley is a treasury that will never change.

In France, I would encounter a sensation of cold indifference compared to the warm embrace of the valley, and I remember several occasions in which I tried to use my French and was rebuffed and replied to in English, which, as any learner of a foreign language knows, is a blow to the sensitive ego. Of course, this cool reception was only in my mind, a thing called culture shock and not representative, as I would later understand, of French people.

I recall most vividly—besides kissing of the cheeks to say hello—the architecture and how everything seemed to be made of stone. And the windows of the houses perhaps being my first honest reflection on culture. In Montana, we enjoy large windows with scenic views of majestic mountains. In France, I found the windows small and dark and impenetrable. When I brought this up in conversation once, an American friend who had been living in France for some time stated frankly: "In America, windows reveal what is inside the home, but in France they conceal the home and are more for opening to get some air and not necessarily for looking in or out. I think this says less about France versus America, and more about urban versus rural architecture; for when I'm in America, I'm almost always in the vast, open country, and when I'm abroad, I usually live in a city.

2. WHAT IS CULTURE? PART 2

Ask a hundred people to define culture, and you will get a hundred different answers. That's probably what is so frustrating and fruitful about culture studies. While ethnography—the discipline within anthropology that directly studies individual cultures—has developed rigorous approaches to the collection of information, ethnology—the field that compares, contrasts, and interprets the anthropologic data—is infected, and rightly so, with an anxiety about its epistemic legitimacy (Sapir, 1949, 200). In short, culture is an everything-word and an everything-concept. Like a compressed computer file or overstuffed suitcase, when used, it needs to be unpacked and sorted.

I have a memory of a learned professor from my university days saying something along the lines of: "When in doubt, follow the etymology of a word, the etymology will never betray you." According to Merriam-Webster, culture works as both a noun and verb and has the following usage on the noun branch: "beliefs or social forms shared by a group. . . enlightenment. . . the act of growing living material. . . cultivation, tillage. . . expert care and training." And on the verb branch, it has two very similar uses: "to grow in a prepared medium" and "to start a culture from." (merriam-webster.com). The root of culture, the Latin verb colere (cŏlo), feeds into all our uses of

culture with the sense of habitation, tilling, and agriculture: “to foster,” “to honor,” “to care” for, and “to adorn” (online-latin-dictionary.com).

The American anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) made a wonderful metaphorical move when he wrote that “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs” (5). Years later, in a recorded interview, Geertz (2022) made three important observations about culture that, at the very least, should help to lighten the anxiety of knowing exactly what it is. First, “it’s important to have more than one concept” of culture. Second, culture is “distributive,” “multiply focused,” and the “lines between culture are not as sharp. . . they fuse into each other.” Third, culture (as Geertz sees it) is a “symbolic structure that gives meaning to [people’s] lives”(33:30-35:05).

Playing off Geertz, I would like to contribute to culture’s metaphorization. A “web” is a trap spun by a pancultural, mythic creature. I say “trap” in order to throw some shade on the colloquial view that culture is always a positive entity. In everyday parlance, we like to endear culture, but anyone who has been in a situation where their existence is countercultural will attest to the crushing, unforgiving power that culture holds over them; this individual might identify as the insect caught in the spiderweb of culture, where the consequences could very well be life or death. Additionally, we cannot bypass the textile relationship that webs have with weaving, be it the Navajo tradition of Spider Woman (Na’ashjéii Asdzáá), who wove the first pattern of the universe (Weindling, 2023) or Arachne, who challenged the goddess Minerva to a weaving contest - for her hubris, she was metamorphosed into a spider (Ovidius Naso, 1893,190). Just as one silk thread of the web vibrates at the lightest touch of the moth, so culture vibrates at the lightest touch of the characters within it.

2.1. The Iceberg Theory

The most common and accessible framework for thinking about culture that I have encountered in my teaching practice is the Iceberg Theory. The implications of the iceberg theory should be self-evident and inspire in the student a sense of profundity and direction (down, deep down) about the stakes of culture. In culture studies, the theory is usually attributed to Edward Hall in his book *Beyond Culture*, though he calls it “covert culture”(1976, 58); however, it is from the writer Ernest Hemingway in his novel *Death in the Afternoon* that the iceberg theory is initially and properly conceptualized.

> If a writer of prose knows enough of what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an ice-berg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water (1955,192).

Let us take a mental journey. Through the magic of imagination, we teleport ourselves to some distant, unknown land where we do not know the language or the customs. Like a transparency, we overlay upon this scenario the iconic image of an iceberg: a water line with a bit of the iceberg above it and the titanic portion lurking beneath. Culturally speaking, the visible part of the iceberg represents the artifacts of culture we can experience with our five senses: the people, the music, the clothing, the smell of food and the taste of it, a ritual such as a wedding or a birthday party, architecture, voices, gestures, eating utensils or the lack thereof. In *The Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, the main character, displaced from his native India, is chastised by a waiter at an Indian restaurant in Canada for eating with his fingers: “My fingers, which a second before had been taste buds

savouring the food a little ahead of my mouth, became dirty under his gaze. They froze like criminals caught in the act."(2001, 7). These surface artifacts can make a modicum of sense to the foreign observer based on the universal human needs of sustenance and shelter, or we have somehow been introduced to them via the prevalence of the internet. We must keep it in the back of our minds that every artifact also contains an immediately ungraspable subsurface aspect, that understanding which lies beneath.

Extending our imaginative journey, we walk to the icy shore and look down. The subsurface (because it is too cold, because we cannot swim, because we do not have gills, because we do not possess a nictitating membrane on our eyes) remains inaccessible to us, providing only a limited and distorted view of the iceberg's majority. This underneath is what Hall calls covert culture (1976, 14). Covert is a fantastic term for it is cognate with the word covered, or hidden, possibly even disguised. Anyone who travels to a new country and stays long enough to engage with the host culture will quickly experience, after the enchantment of tourism wears thin, a desire for a fuller, thicker experience. But such a communion is not easily gained, and, as our metaphor should imply, the journey down to the unconscious depths is one of life-altering experiences.

2.2. Back in Laos

In Vientiane there is a long, dusty, seldom-trodden lane I walk to get to the gym. It takes thirty minutes each way, and because of my schedule I go in the heat of the day. In the months since starting this habit my neck and arms have tanned exceptionally dark. There's a woman I sometimes encounter who covers herself from head to toe. She wears boots, long pants, a hoodie, a scarf around her ears and over her mouth, sunglasses, and a conical hat. She's a seller of mysterious items in a basket she slings over her shoulder, and I know her from a distance without seeing her by the tinkle of a bell she rings when she approaches a house. When I first encountered her, I admit that I thought her getup was insane for such a hot climate, but I soon came to realize how crucial it is to keep the sun off your skin when work requires you to be outside all day long. From time to time, it's not uncommon to pass a man in a business suit or a monk in a kāṣāya (saffron-colored robe) carrying a parasol. Again, this makes the utmost sense, but in the culture of my upbringing, only a lady would use such an instrument to ward off the sun—we men endure it, or we would wear a cowboy hat, but that would be culturally awkward in this country, or so I think—maybe cowboy hats are perfectly acceptable? But my walk is only thirty minutes, and I can shelter now and then under a canopy or in the shade of a palm. The power of culture is as nonsensical as it is sensible. It is as forgiving as it is unforgiving.

2.3. The Soup Theory

In my mind, culture is more fluid than a spider's web. I find a watery metaphor indispensable in my own conceptualizing of culture; therefore, I would like to show a little hubris of my own and dare to introduce another metaphor to help bend our minds around it: soup, a giant, all-encompassing caldron of soup in which we humans are slowly cooking, bobbing up and down next to the potatoes, carrots, little chunks of garlic, or whatever else might be in there. This image, I feel, pays homage

[4] Here ***thicker*** is consanguine with ***deeper***, both difference and distinction unimportant at this time; inspired by Geertz's conceptualization of "thick description," where he challenges the ethnographer to describe not only the what (the thin) but the why (the thick) to go into the "multiplicity of complex conceptual structures. . . superimposed upon or knotted into one another. . . at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit. . ." (Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*: Selected Essays, 10.)

to the liquid deep in which our iceberg floats, mostly submerged, but also to culture's personality of cultivation and to the vegetable nature thereof.

2.4. On Being an American

"What is an American?" This exact syntax has been posed to me, but the question is never phrased too boldly; sometimes it is an inquiry about this or that stereotype of America, or sometimes it's a question to see what I think about an aspect of my students' culture (my host culture - Danger! This territory is riddled with mines!). On being an American, my answer must consider that the United States is a landmass with many people from diverse backgrounds, each possessing a different perspective about the meanings of being an American. Deconstruct or problematize the analogy as you like, but America is truly a melting pot. Go to any international port of entry and look for the characters who are in the "U.S. Passport Holders" queue. The only thing homogeneous about that line is its diversity.

2.5. On Being Montanan

Just as I cannot speak for everyone in my country, I cannot even pretend to say anything profound about Montana, the state where I was born and raised, other than my own experiences and observations. The Montana I know best lies west of the Great Continental Divide, that highest part of the Rocky Mountains spanning North and South America from the Bearing Sea above Alaska all the way down to the Strait of Magellan at the very tip of Southern Chile. On my side of the Divide, the rivers flow into the Pacific Ocean; and on the eastern side, the other side, they spill into the Atlantic. Growing up, the idea somehow got cooked into my brain that, firstly, this is the natural and God-intended order of nature, for not only was west the direction of the watershed, but also the sun and the moon, and my osmotic indoctrination of manifest destiny ("go west, young man"), that this way is freedom and liberation from the cosmopolitan old world of hierarchy and decree; and, secondly, the belief that Western Montana is more rugged, more green, more beautiful than anything east of it - a prejudice I hold to this day with religious fervor. These sentiments may be viewed as the idiosyncratic mental mapping of a boy's burgeoning awakening to geopolitics; for "Griz Country" west of the Continental Divide is named after the Grizzlies, the American football team of the University of Montana, and "Cat Country" to the east of the Divide is so called because of the Montana State University Bobcats - a bitter and long-standing sport rivalry that has ever existed. Whenever the fate of a road trip took me across this geographical boundary, I felt a certain trespass, and when I crossed back, a definitive sense of homecoming.

2.6. Iceberg Theory Applied

At the beginning of my intercultural communication classes—after getting everyone's take on the What-is-culture? question—I like to start with the picture of a police officer. The role of this character is above the surface at the visible part of the iceberg. Everyone knows that police are there to enforce laws and keep us safe by responding to emergencies; however, in the United States—and I believe this goes for the world entire—there is a fraught relationship between law enforcement and the citizenry. The next picture I show is of a donut, again a cultural artifact that is globally ubiquitous. Immediately, I hear chuckles around the room. The third picture I show is of the law enforcement officer eating a donut. This always gets a laugh. I don't know the origin of this meme, but for my purposes, I'm going to plant the American flag in this deep-fried pastry. "Why

did you laugh?" I ask. "Because he's eating the donut," says one student. "Police eating donuts are funny," says another. We are at the boundary now, ready to plunge our heads into the water, into the thick culture of what lies beneath. "Why is a cop eating a donut funny?" Somewhere around this question, I explain that the word 'cop' is an informal synonym for police. A joker in the back of the room shouts out, "Pig!" The potency of American culture has flavored the soup. "But why do we laugh?" The room quiets. The next few pictures I show are of police violence, a reemerging archetype in the American psyche: a black and white photo of state troopers teargassing and beating civil rights marchers on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama on March 7th, 1965; a grainy video capture of LAPD officers viciously clubbing motorist Rodney King in Los Angeles, California on March 3rd, 1991; a high-definition photograph of MPD officer Derek Michael Chauvin kneeling on the neck of George Floyd in front of Cup Foods Grocery Store in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 25th, 2020.

The meme of a cop eating a donut is funny, but it is not simply funny, I tell my students. It is satire. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary online entices us upon another etymological journey by revealing that satire (arriving into English at the beginning of the 1500s) derivates from satura, (merriam-webster.com) which could mean "full, well fed, stuffed, plump, or fertile," (online-latin-dictionary.com) depending on its context. Merriam-Webster carries two definitions of satire. The first: "a literary work holding up human vices and follies to ridicule or scorn." But it is the second definition that really gets to the meat of the issue: "trenchant wit, irony, or sarcasm used to expose and discredit vice or folly." "Trenchant wit" is what we are getting at. According to Merriam-Webster the word trenchant can mean "keen/sharp. . .vigorously effective and articulate," "caustic," which means "capable of destroying or eating away". Trenchant spawns out of the French "trencher" (to cut) (merriam-webster.com). Satire cuts at culture's power structure, not a fatal slice to the jugular, but a slash across the heel which disables, diminishes, deconstructs, and reveals the systematized hypocrisy within the cultural system. This is why a picture of a cop happily eating a donut provokes such instantaneous and ironic laughter. In the American mind, it is ironic that an officer of the law, whether of his own will or directed by higher powers, would use his position of authority to abuse the populace that he is sworn to protect. And it follows that to ridicule him by making him out to be a fat, lazy bastard is satire. The literary critic Northrop Frye wrote that "The satirist has to select his absurdities, and the act of selection is a moral act" (2020, 224).

This example of the donut-eating cop has taken us from the surface-level artifact into the subsurface world of high-context culture. It brings us to a recognition of meaning because the same rhetorical move has no doubt been played in many cultures and at many points in history. But it beggars the question: how does one come to understand anything of significance about another culture if every artifact that exists on the surface possesses a similar depth? The short but honest answer is that you don't. You can't. This is the problem I've always had with teaching culture, especially the project of intercultural communication in the English language classroom. It is a hopeful aspiration on an impossible mission. At its absolute best, ICC has only ever been a practice in awareness and tolerance.

2.7. A Recipe for Soup: 1 Cup of Education

A rudimentary search of journal archive JSTOR returns more than ten thousand articles on the topic of cultural studies. This scholarship comprises both scientific-esque quantitative and theoretical-

esque qualitative investigations into the matter. Despite all this, because of the special nature of culture as an everything-word, as something both concrete and abstract, the study of culture is, and always will be, open for play. Therefore, I am now going to put on my chef's hat and articulate just a few elements that go into the culture soup of an American. I will add my disclaimer by stating that by no means am I attempting to speak for anyone besides the figure looking back at me in the mirror; but just as there is a thread of truth in every stereotype, so too is there a tread of generality in every individual, just as what applies to all applies to me and what applies to me applies to some.

I was born under the sign of Pisces in the year 1979, in northwest Montana, in the little town of Ronan, nestled in the heart of the Mission Valley, on the beautiful Flathead Indian Reservation of the Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d'Oreille tribes. My father was of Nordic blood, an entrepreneur, restauranteur, mechanic, engineer, and townie who had already lived one life traveling the world as a civil servant (a proud term) before settling in the hinterlands of Montana to start a family. My mother was half Honduran, kind, and devoted to God in the tradition of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a faith in which she raised me and my siblings. My family was "well off" for a time in regard to money, but due to the economic downturn in the late 1980s, we fell on hard times; my parents divorced, and I and my siblings stayed with my father. We moved from a large farmhouse near the foothills of the mountains to a single-wide trailer house in the middle of a section of wheat and potato fields near the Flathead River. It was here I would live until eventually going to university. So, despite an adulthood of city dwelling, I still have a rural heart.

From first through eighth grade, I attended a small school run by the church. It was set in a beautiful meadow outside of town, not far from the railroad tracks. I still remember the horn and the train's distant rumble interrupting my studies. In my day, the school had about thirty students and two classrooms, each with floor-to-ceiling windows giving a vista of the majestic Mission Mountains. The south room educated the elementary students, or "little kids," and the north room the middle school students, or "big kids." Therefore, grades 1–4 would study communally, each level visiting the teacher at her table as another level did their lessons, and likewise in the north room with grades 5–8. The third room was a large gymnasium, and next to that, a kitchen and restrooms. The gymnasium was used by the church for meetings, ceremonies such as 8th grade graduation, the yearly Christmas pageant, potlucks, and Passover. (N.B. Seventh-day Adventists is an Old Testament religion which recognizes, uniquely, Saturday as a holy day of rest instead of Sunday.)

A typical day included time for individual and communal lessons. Two students who arrived early were entrusted with respectfully raising the flag on the flagpole, which stood across a large yard near the road. In the mornings after prayer—each student was given a chance to say the morning prayer in his or her turn—we would put our right hands over our hearts and recite the Pledge of Allegiance, and then do Bible study. In this culture of my childhood, God always came before country. Communally, we studied the King James Bible and said the Bible verses that we had committed to memory. Though not a religious person, to this day I can still recite many of them, particularly the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. / He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." A pastoral verse for a pastoral education. After Bible, there was Math, then P.E., when we would play softball or kickball in the summer on the yard beneath the flag, or in winters retire to the gym for a variety of indoor games—back then, before the cancellation years, dodge ball was a popular option. At noon came lunch, blessed by a communal prayer, again rotated among the students but always containing the same blessing: Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for this food that will nourish our bodies so that we may serve you… Amen. Monday through Thursday, we would eat a sack lunch outside in good weather or at our

desks in inclement. A sack lunch might consist, traditionally, of a sandwich, potato chips, some fruit, and a drink. Fridays was always "hot lunch," which was normally prepared by a group of mothers, and we would take it at tables in the gym that were the responsibility of the big kids to set up. A typical hot lunch was served buffet style and might consist of a casserole, bread, vegetables, salad, and a delicious dessert. Pitchers of fruit juice were ready for a drink. After lunch, there was recess, which was usually a bit of free time to play sports or hang out with friends. The second half of the day started with free reading and Grammar in our biblically themed workbooks, then Science or Social Studies, which on certain days were communal, as we would listen to classmates give a report or presentation. The day ended with another prayer given by the teacher and usually touching on a moral theme that we ought to be good Christians out there in the fallen world. I can remember always the ending, "Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another." And then the flag would be lowered and folded ceremoniously by the same students who raised it that morning. It wouldn't be until I entered high school that I would learn my formative education was unique. And though I may have suffered because the religious education did not have resources and specialties for the sciences, I prospered in other ways; for instance, my reading and writing skills were above my age group, and I have a good knowledge and appreciation of the King James Bible which, along with Shakespeare, is the most beautiful form of English there is. The faculty at the church school always consisted of a husband-and-wife teacher team. The wife, who had some musical ability (piano or auto-harp), always taught the little kids and the husband the big kids. In addition to our standard education, we also had special classes that took advantage of our rural setting. I remember a demonstration of firearms (something that would be unheard of today); once, the father of a student brought his antique flintlock and showed us how to load it and shoot it. We learned, as well, wilderness survival techniques such as how to build a lean-to shelter, how to start a fire without any matches, and the proper technique for rowing a canoe.

Montana is Spanish for mountain, which makes sense, as the western third is marked by the Rocky Mountains. If you search on the internet for The Great Seal of the State of Montana, you will find a circular design centered on a picturesque landscape symbolizing Montana's natural beauty and resources. It depicts the Rocky Mountains, the Missouri River, and the Great Falls, along with a plow, a pick, and a shovel in the foreground to represent agriculture and mining. A ribbon at the bottom bears the state motto, "Oro y Plata" (Spanish for Gold and Silver), highlighting Montana's mineral wealth. This seal gives the state its first nickname, The Treasure State. But there are two other nicknames: "Big Sky Country," taken from A.B. Guthrie's 1947 novel *The Big Sky*. This nickname makes sense if you were to ever see the flatlands east of the Rockies where the author grew up. Out there is just land and sky that seems to go on and on forever. The final nickname is "The Last Best Place," also taken from a 1983 book by the conservationist author Douglas H. Chadwick. In his book, Chadwick studies the dwindling population of mountain goats that live on the steep sides of the Rocky Mountains and argues for a conservationist mentality in order to preserve their habitat. I remember growing up and visiting Glacier National Park with my family and the thrill of spotting these elusive and majestic creatures. "The Last Best Place" has become an ethos in the culture of many Montanans; it fills us with a sense of pride at our natural wonders and a slight feeling of superiority over the other states that are not the last best place. After school, I would return to my family's house on the farm. I remember a distinct sense of freedom in being able to walk without worry for miles around, exploring the fields, woods, and abandoned buildings dating back over a hundred years. Treasure State, Big Sky Country, The Last Best Place were flavors and ingredients in my cultural soup.

2.8. Recipe: Mix it in The Melting Pot

In every country around the world, early education is also a time of patriotic indoctrination. This comes in America with a sense of both exceptionalism at the accomplishments of our country and a sense of guilt at the many things we got wrong growing up as a nation. One of the first things we learn in school is that diversity in America is an asset. Even outside of our borders, I have met people who tell me that America is truly a melting pot, as can be evidenced, as I've already mentioned, by the varied ethnicities one sees in the lines at the airport for those who hold a United States passport. But this melting pot idea is not new; it goes all the way back to an enigmatic French American farmer and writer by the name of J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur.

De Crèvecœur's American defining contribution is strongest in a single chapter of his book *Letters From an American Farmer*. De Crèvecœur himself can be viewed as a symbol of the contradiction of American identity—contradiction, as my French friend espoused to me more than twenty years ago, is a dumpling in the cultural soup of my country. Born in France as Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crèvecoeur to a family of "minor nobility," (Moore, 2011, 133) he was, perhaps due to a family dispute, "shipped off to England," (133) where he engaged to marry, but the early and tragic death of his fiancé propelled him to Canada, where he would eventually fight the British and get wounded in September of 1759 (Mazlish, 1982, 142) during the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. According to Bruce Mazlish, this is when "a mystery clouds de Crèvecœur's life" (142). In October of that same year, he is "forced" to leave his military commission, and the next we spot him, he is in New York before Christmas having taken the name J. Hector St. John, "and a new American was Born" (143).

Letter III, What is an American?, from *Letters From an American Farmer*, in one epic literary move implanted into me (via my education and the ambiance of America in general) that mythical and indomitable sense of Americanness. In this letter, the fictitious narrator called Farmer James, ostensibly de Crèvecœur himself, writes to an anonymous audience about the inhabitants of a cultivated land that "a hundred years ago was wild." Contrasting the "new continent" of freedom and mobility with an old Europe of static hierarchy, he writes: "It is not composed of great lords who possess everything, and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion…"(1782, 46). In America "we are all the tillers of the earth…united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable"(47).

Our early American writer paints a dystopian view of the old world in Europe, one of starvation, political and religious subjugation, and intellectual rot (53); whereas in the new America the "new man" lives in a picture like The Great Seal of the State of Montana, an agrarian utopia bursting with individualistic, entrepreneurial spirit, because here there is no "despotic prince… rich abbot… mighty lord" to steal the rewards of one's labor (53).

[5] As an aside, continuing the theme of contradictoriness in American culture, Bryce Traister puts forwards a convincing, though inconclusive, argument that de Crèvecœur could have been an informant for the British crown against the colonies. Bryce Traister, "Criminal Correspondence: Loyalism, Espionage and Crèvecoeur," Early American Literature 37, no. 3 (2002): 492, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25057283. Looking at his rhetoric, the argument of his allegiance may have swung either way, at the very least he walks that uncertain, confused line of identity that is part of our American cultural soup.

2.9. Recipe: 1 Cup of Shame

Despite this heavy flavor of freedom, the cultural soup of America has always contained the bitter history of the most despicable practice man has ever created: that of slavery. In his book, de Crèvecœur does not always wear the rose-colored glasses through which we look in Letter III. In Letter IX, we come upon the rich excesses of "Charles-Town," South Carolina, chiefly inhabited by an elite class of wealthy "lawyers, planters, and merchants" (215) whose obese bodies show the signs of their uninhibited lives of eat and drink (214-215). And like the despotic princes of the Old World, these new lords have become obsessed with wealth and power (215-216).

In the midst of Charles-Town's largess, there is darkness to which the ruling class have become deaf and blind and "hardened"(216). "Here the horrors of slavery, the hardship of incessant toils, are unseen; and no one thinks with compassion of those showers of sweat and of tears which from the bodies of Africans, daily drop, and moisten the ground they till. The cracks of the whip urging these miserable beings to excessive labour, are far too distant from the gay Capital to be heard" (216).

De Crèvecœur now meditates on the earliest of American contradictions: the owner and the owned. The rich owners "enjoying all that life affords most bewitching and pleasurable," while the owned suffer from "wars, murders, and devastations…committed in some harmless, peaceable African neighborhood, where dwelt innocent people, who even knew not but that all men were black." He describes families torn apart and "arranged like horses at a fair" to be sold and "branded like cattle." "Strange order of things!" cries out Farmer James, "Oh, Nature, where art thou?—Are not these blacks thy children as well as we?" (217) What follows is a sociological and psychological argument against slavery (ironically contrasting the evil as it is practiced in the south with the humane slavery from his home in the north, where slaves are considered part of the family (221)), stating that the end result of such an abhorrent institution can only be the cultivation of hatred from the owned towards the owner: "is there any thing in this treatment but what must kindle all the passions, sow the seeds of inveterate resentment, and nourish a wish of perpetual revenge?" (223)

The section concludes in a nightmarish scene with Farmer James on a walk to visit a plantation owner when he comes upon a slave hanging in a cage. The birds have pecked out his eyes and the flesh of his cheeks, revealing only bones; insects cover his body, "eager to feed on his mangled flesh and to drink his blood" (234). He writes, "Had I a ball in my gun, I certainly should have dispatched him" (234). Unable to kill this suffering wretch, he instead offers him water, to which the slave asks for poison, that he may finally die. Leaving the slave and arriving at the plantation, the planter tells him that this slave rose up and killed his master, and thus was his punishment under the "doctrine of slavery" for "the laws of self-preservations rendered such executions necessary" (235).

2.10. Will You Hold This Mirror for Me, Mr. Dickens?

When Charles Dickens stepped foot on American soil in Boston, Massachusetts, in the winter of 1842, it would be hard to overestimate his celebrity. By that time, he had not written his great books - especially *Great Expectations* or *A Tale of Two Cities*, which one-sentence paragraphs confounded me in my high school years - but his sketches from Boz and characters from *The*

Pickwick Papers were as familiar to the reader at that time as, say, Harry Potter is to us in our time (Jenkins and Skogen 2015, 11.00-11.55). In the series entitled *Conversations at BSC: Dickens and America*, professor Larry Skogen cites the author as writing about the difficulties he had getting around due to his notoriety: "I can do nothing that I want to do, go nowhere where I want to go, and see nothing that I want to see. If I turn into the street, I am followed by a multitude" (Jenkins and Skogen 2015, 50.13-50.26).

Though Dickens was impressed with certain facets of the upstart democracy in such institutions as schools and hospitals (1996, Chapter IV), the book he would publish upon his return to England is a scathing critique of cultural artifacts that, to this day, might be a difficult mirror for the American to look into. For instance, on the issue of presidential elections, he notices how strong political partisanship is, and if, say, one man's candidate did not win the election for president, his attitude is to be quiet and just wait three and a half years for the next election to turn it over (Chapter IV). In Washington, D.C., he comments on the "offensive and sickening" habit of chewing tobacco. In a court of law, the judge spits, the witness spits, the criminal spits. In hospitals, the doctors spit. Everyone spits so much it's like "a shower of yellow rain" (Chapter VIII). Gun violence in the land of liberty is not special to our current era of mass shootings in schools. Dickens cites newspaper notices of gun duels. In one, each man had six pistols each, and the shooting only stopped when one of the combatants took a bullet in the thigh. Another notice describes the gun fight between "two young bloods of our city," aged fifteen and thirteen, each armed with rifles; when a bullet went through the top of the thirteen-year-old's hat—not hitting him—the duel ended and "the difference amicably adjusted" (Chapter XVII).

But Dicken's harshest critique was of the prevailing institution of slavery. He no doubt was familiar with de Crèvecœur's critique sixty years earlier, and, as the internal slavery debate in America was a firestorm at the time of Dicken's visit, perhaps he thought he could hasten its demise with a vicious literary lashing.

Dickens describes three "classes" of slavery in America. The first class includes slaveholders who see slavery as wrong and dangerous, but keep it for financial reasons. The second class fiercely defends slavery, denying its cruelty and putting their power above all else. The third class uses slavery to boost their social status, needing enslaved people to feel superior in a society that claims to value equality (Chapter XVII).

The pro-slavery argument at the time rested under the democratic ideals of America, wherein if the majority of those in the slave-owning states agreed to slavery, then slavery would stay-ideals that, in the face of such an evil practice, Dickens found absurd and hypocritical. He quotes from a newspaper advertisement for runaway slaves, each one more horrific, each one sanctioned under the American system of democratic values.

> *'Ran away, Negress Caroline. Had on a collar with one prong turned down.'*
> . . .
> *'Ran away, the negro Manuel. Much marked with irons.'*
> . . .
> *'Ran away, a negro boy about twelve years old. Had round his neck a chain dog-collar with "De Lampert" engraved on it.'*
> . . .
> *'Ran away, a negro woman and two children. A few days before she went off, I burnt her with a hot iron, on the left side of her face. I tried to make the letter M.'*

> . . .
> *'Ran away, a negro woman named Rachel. Has lost all her toes except the large one.'*
> . . .
> *'Ran away, Sam. He was shot a short time since through the hand, and has several shots in his left arm and side.'*
> . . .
> *'Ran away, a negro girl called Mary. Has a small scar over her eye, a good many teeth missing, the letterA is branded on her cheek and forehead.'*
> . . .
> *Ran away, from the plantation of James Surgette, the following negroes: Randal, has one ear cropped; Bob, has lost one eye; Kentucky Tom, has one jaw broken.' (Chapter XVII)*

It was fitting that Dickens should end his travelogue with the atrocities he witnessed in the slave states. He, a foreigner from a monarchy against which America battled and won its independence, held up the cultural mirror to the American face, and by the weight of his fame, forced a nation and the world to look cleanly at the flagrant hypocrisy.

> On one theme, which is commonly before our eyes, and in respect of which our national character is changing fast, let the plain Truth be spoken, and let us not, like dastards, beat about the bush by hinting at the Spaniard and the fierce Italian. When knives are drawn by Englishmen in conflict let it be said and known: 'We owe this change to Republican Slavery. These are the weapons of Freedom. With sharp points and edges such as these, Liberty in America hews and hacks her slaves; or, failing that pursuit, her sons devote them to a better use, and turn them on each other (Chapter XVII).

3. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

When I put on my metaphor glasses, I realize that from the haunted bridges of Vietnam to the sun-drenched lanes of Laos, from the bilingual communities of the Saint John Valley to the stone edifices of France inlaid with dark windows, these are just a few of the experiences that compose the artifact that is me. I've come to understand culture as a multifaceted entity, both visible and deeply hidden. My early education in a small, rural school in Montana, steeped in religious teachings and close-knit community values, colors, in part, my perception of the world. The practices, rituals, and communal experiences of my youth are threads in the vast web of culture that Clifford Geertz describes—a web we are all weavers of and ensnared within. Or, it is a soup, a blend of diverse ingredients simmering together, each flavor influencing the other.

In the works of J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur and Charles Dickens, I see the enduring complexities and contradictions that culture embodies. De Crèvecœur's portrayal of America as a melting pot, a land of freedom and new beginnings, and Dickens' mirror reflecting hypocrisies and injustices as dark as one could ever imagine, reveal that culture is not solely a celebration of shared values but also our shared failings.

As a TESOL instructor, these reflections can't help but inform my approach to teaching intercultural communicative competence and culture in general. Acknowledging the visible artifacts of culture—the iceberg's tip —is essential, but always remembering the mass of it we cannot see. That which is submerged, as Hemingway wrote, gives it all that "dignity of movement."

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Professional Pathways in the United States Social Work: An Overview of Education, Licensure and Supervisorship*

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abstract

This article presents an overview of the educational, licensure, and supervisory frameworks that govern professional social work practice in the United States. It delineates the requisite steps for attaining the status of both a social worker and a supervisor, emphasizing the necessity of obtaining a degree from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and fulfilling state-specific licensure requirements. The article further explores best practice standards in supervision, addressing legal, ethical, and technological considerations, as well as the critical roles of cultural competence and professional development. Moreover, it elucidates the contributions of key organizations, including CSWE, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB), in promoting high-quality, accountable, and ethically guided practice.

Keywords: social work profession, social work education, social worker, social supervision and supervisor

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1. INTRODUCTION

The social work profession plays a fundamental role in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by individuals, families, and communities. As a practice-oriented discipline, social work necessitates not only a robust educational foundation but also continuous professional oversight to ensure the effective delivery of services. Supervision, as a core component of social work practice, facilitates the professional development of social workers, ensures compliance with ethical standards, and contributes to the overall enhancement of service quality.

Social work practices in the United States are based on a complex set of processes and standards, ranging from professional education to licensure. This article seeks to offer a comprehensive overview of the social work profession in the United States, with particular emphasis on the role of supervision. It examines the educational prerequisites, licensure processes, and the career trajectory for becoming a social worker and supervisor. Furthermore, the article explores the established best practice standards in supervision and highlights the key professional organizations that influence and regulate the field.

2. BECOMING A SOCIAL WORKER IN THE USA

Social workers play a pivotal role in the supervision process, functioning as professionals who receive supervision, as supervisors who provide it, and as potential candidates for supervisory roles. In the United States, becoming a social worker involves successfully completing a series of rigorous and structured steps, which are outlined below.

2.1. Social Work Education in the USA

The foundational requirement for pursuing a career in social work in the United States is obtaining a degree from an accredited social work program. This typically involves earning either a bachelor's degree (BSW) or a master's degree (MSW) from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Importantly, graduates from non-accredited programs are not eligible to practice as social workers in the U.S. (Social Work Guide, 2024a). Thus, obtaining a degree from an accredited institution constitutes the first and most critical step in entering the social work profession.

Admission requirements for social work undergraduate programs in the U.S. often include a minimum high school GPA of 2.5/4.0, standardized test scores (such as the SAT or ACT), two academic or professional reference letters, and evidence of at least 40 hours of volunteer or paid work in human services organizations (All Psychology Schools, 2024). Undergraduate social work programs typically span four years and require students to complete at least 120 academic credits to earn a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree (Social Work Guide, 2024a). As part of these programs, students must also complete a minimum of 400 hours of supervised field practice, which is a mandatory component in all accredited programs (All Psychology Schools, 2024).

Higher education in the U.S. is fee-based, with annual tuition fees for social work programs reaching up to $40,000. The BSW is considered the minimum qualification for entry into the profession, offering students a broad foundation in social work practice. The curriculum often covers key areas such as case management, community and program organization, utilization of community resources, and the development of essential skills including client advocacy and crisis intervention (SocialWorkLicensure.Org, 2024a).

In the United States, individuals can also pursue employment as social workers with a master's degree in social work (MSW). While the specific admission requirements for MSW programs vary by university, standard prerequisites typically include a bachelor's degree in a human services-related field such as social work, psychology, anthropology, or sociology, along with a GRE score that meets the threshold set by the institution (SocialWorkGuide.org 2024b). Completing an MSW program generally requires two years of full-time study, during which students must earn approximately 60 credits and complete a minimum of 1,000 hours of supervised field practice (All Psychology Schools 2024b). Graduates with an advanced degree in social work are qualified to work in specialized areas such as mental health, education, healthcare, and clinical settings. They may take on roles such as therapists, medical social workers, school social workers, or clinical social workers.The US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has projected an overall increase of 7% in the employment of social workers between the years 2023 and 2033. This clearly indicates that there is a strong demand for professionals in the field (BLS, 2024). Owing to this fact, it is possible to state that there is an increasing interest in social work education in the U.S.

At the doctoral level, the field of social work in the United States offers two distinct programs: the research-focused Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and the practice-oriented Doctor of Social Work (DSW). The DSW program is designed for professionals who wish to advance their expertise in clinical practice, while the PhD program emphasizes research and prepares individuals for academic and research-oriented careers in various institutions (SocialWorkLicensure.Org, 2024b; Social Work Degree 2024). Admission to either program typically requires a master's degree in social work from an accredited institution, a GPA ranging from 3.0 to 3.5, and a GRE score that meets the requirements of the admitting university (Social Work Guide 2024c).

2.2. Social Work Licensure

In the United States, obtaining a professional license is the next essential step after completing social work education for those pursuing a career in social work. Licensure refers to a formal process administered by a state-level authority, mandated by law, to permit an individual to practice a regulated profession (U.S. Department of Education International Affairs Office, 2024). In essence, it signifies that the licensee has met the specified professional competency standards required for practice (Hickman, 1994).

In the U.S., professions regulated by law are generally required to obtain licensure at the state level. A prerequisite for social work licensure is the attainment of a bachelor's or master's degree in social work. Similar to other regulated professions such as medicine, law, nursing, engineering, therapy, and psychology, social workers must acquire state-specific licenses for legal practice (CareerOneStop.Org, 2024).

Licensure differs from certification and registration in several ways. Licensure typically entails stricter requirements and confers higher professional status. While licensure is mandatory for social workers in the U.S., certification and registration are optional in many states. Additionally, holding a license obligates the individual to adhere to a professional code of ethics or conduct. Violations of these standards can result in disciplinary actions, including sanctions or the revocation of licensure (Hickman, 1994).

In the United States, a social work license is required not only to practice the profession but also to use the title of "social worker" (Munday, 2023; New Jersey Administrative Code, 1991). Licenses are issued at the state level and are valid exclusively within the state where they are obtained. The general requirements for state licensure typically include graduation from a program accredited by

the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and successful completion of the social work licensure examination administered by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) (Munday, 2023).

For instance, in New Jersey, the Social Workers' Licensing Act of 1991 led to the establishment of the New Jersey State Board of Social Work Examiners (BSWE) (New Jersey Administrative Code, 1991). This board is tasked with protecting the quality of social work services in New Jersey by setting the educational, training, and experience standards necessary for individuals to be certified or licensed as social workers within the state (New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, 2024). The board grants licenses in three categories, issuing certificates to individuals with a bachelor's degree and licenses to those holding a master's or doctoral degree in social work (New Jersey Administrative Code, 1991; New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, 2024).

(i) Certified Social Worker (CSW): The foundational requirement for obtaining this certification is a bachelor's degree in social work from a higher education program accredited, or in the process of being accredited, by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (Social Work Guide, 2024d). Social workers with CSW certification are qualified to provide services such as assessment, consultation and counseling, planning and community organization, policy and research, management, and client-centered advocacy (New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, 2024).

(ii) Licensed Social Worker (LSW): This licensure requires a master's or doctoral degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited or candidate program, in addition to passing the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) exam tailored for individuals with a master's degree but no prior experience (Social Work Guide, 2024e). LSWs are authorized to deliver all services allowed under CSW certification, as well as clinical social services under the supervision of a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) (New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, 2024).

(iii) Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW): To obtain this licensure, candidates must hold a master's or doctoral degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited or candidate program, complete two years or 3,000 hours of clinical social work under LCSW supervision, and pass the ASWB Clinical Exam (NASW-New Jersey Chapter, 2024a). In New Jersey, LCSW candidates are required to hold an LSW license during their supervised clinical work. Supervisors must have at least three years of licensure as an LCSW and must have completed 20 hours of continuing education in supervision. Candidates must receive a minimum of one hour of supervision per week throughout their clinical practice.

Of the required 3,000 supervised hours, 1,920 hours must involve direct client services, with 960 of those hours focused on providing psychotherapeutic counseling. The supervised clinical experience must be completed within a minimum of two years and a maximum of four years. Upon fulfilling the clinical experience requirement, candidates must apply to the New Jersey Board of Social Work Examiners (BSWE) for approval and subsequently pass the ASWB Clinical Exam (Social Work Guide, 2024f). Social workers with LCSW licensure are authorized to provide clinical supervision in addition to all the services specified for CSW and LSW (New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, 2024).

In the U.S., all social workers are required to renew their licenses biennially (New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, 2024). Each level of licensure and certification has distinct continuing education (CE) requirements. All social workers must complete five hours of ethics three hours of

competency training in socio-cultural issues. CSWs must complete 20 hours, LSWs 30 hours, and LCSWs 40 hours of CE during each renewal period (Social Work Guide, 2024f).

3. BECOMING A SUPERVISOR IN THE USA

The journey to becoming a supervisor in the field of social work is shaped by a combination of personal, professional, and organizational factors. In the United States, the qualifications for becoming a social work supervisor are defined by licensing rules and regulatory standards within each state's jurisdiction. These standards may vary by level of social work practice or may apply universally across all levels.

According to the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) and ASWB (Association of Social Work Boards) Best Practice Standards for Social Work Supervision, the general criteria for becoming a supervisor include (NASW & ASWB, 2013):

1. Valid licensure to practice in the jurisdiction (state) where both the supervisor and supervisee operate, at or above the level at which supervision will be provided.
2. A degree from an accredited school of social work.
3. Completion of the minimum number of continuing education hours in supervision practice, as determined by the jurisdiction.
4. At least three years of post-licensure practice experience, or more if specified by licensing laws.
5. Completion of continuing education hours necessary to maintain the validity of the supervision certification.
6. No disciplinary sanctions from the licensing board, including disqualifications, fines, or other penalties for professional violations.

While these criteria are broadly applicable, specific requirements may vary by state. For example, in New Jersey, the qualifications for becoming a supervisor include:

1. Holding a valid New Jersey LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker) license.
2. Having three years of clinical experience post-LCSW licensure.
3. Maintaining an LCSW license in good standing (e.g., free of disciplinary actions) (SocialWorkSupervisor.com, 2024).
4. Completing a minimum of 20 continuing post-graduate education credits in clinical supervision (NASW-New Jersey Chapter, 2024b).

Professional development activities—such as courses, workshops, and conferences on supervision offered by professional organizations or universities—facilitate the transition to a supervisory role and are often undertaken during the licensing period (Study.Com, 2024).

In summary, the criteria for becoming a social work supervisor in the United States typically include earning a degree from an accredited social work program, obtaining a state-level license, acquiring substantial post-licensure field experience, and engaging in ongoing professional development, particularly in supervision-related education. These qualifications ensure that supervisors are well-equipped to oversee and guide professional practice in the field of social work.

4. BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

While regional laws governing social work supervision and supervisor qualifications vary due to the federal structure of the United States, the Best Practice Standards in Social Work Supervision[1], developed by two prominent professional organizations, the NASW (National Association of Social Workers) and the ASWB (Association of Social Work Boards), have established a national framework for standardized supervision practices across the country (NASW and ASBW, 2013). These standards outline five key areas of focus: the content of supervision, supervision management, legal and regulatory considerations, ethical issues, and the use of technology in supervision (NASW and ASBW, 2013). Additionally, the standards address important aspects such as the definition of supervision, the supervision process, the qualifications required for supervisors, the evaluation of supervision, and the termination of the supervision process.

The first standard, context in supervision, focuses on the foundational context in which supervision occurs. It emphasizes that supervisors must possess the requisite qualifications and a clear understanding of the knowledge and skills necessary to support the professional development of supervisees effectively. The standard highlights the unique challenges faced by social workers who often practice within the social environments in which they reside. This proximity can result in dual or multiple relationships; therefore, supervisors are tasked with ensuring that the professional relationship remains paramount and safeguarded in all circumstances. In the context of interdisciplinary supervision, particularly within teams comprising professionals from various disciplines, the standard underscores that social workers should receive supervision from someone within their own profession. Similarly, professionals from other disciplines should be matched with supervisors who share their specific field of expertise. Cultural awareness and cross-cultural supervision are also addressed. According to the NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice[2], social work supervisors must be able to convey knowledge about diverse client groups and guide supervisees in employing culturally appropriate methodologies, skills, and techniques in their practice. Lastly, the standard provides guidance on dual supervision and potential conflicts that may arise when administrative and clinical supervision are handled by different individuals. It emphasizes the importance of contractual agreements to define roles and processes clearly. In the absence of such agreements, the hiring manager retains ultimate decision-making authority.

The second standard, conduct of supervision, addresses the effective management of the supervision process. It highlights that the proper guidance of supervisees is contingent upon the skills and expertise of supervisors. A respect-based approach between supervisors and supervisees is deemed essential for a successful supervision process. With respect to confidentiality, the standard mandates that supervisors ensure the confidentiality of all client information, except in cases where legal obligations require disclosure. Supervisors and supervisees are also required to establish a written contract that outlines the terms of the supervision relationship. Supervisors play a critical role in the professional development of supervisees and are responsible for creating a conducive learning environment. In terms of competence, the standard underscores the importance of supervisors engaging in continuous self-improvement, staying informed about advancements in social work practice, and integrating evidence-based practices into the supervision process.

[1] The Best Practice Standards in Social Work Supervision can be accessed from: https://www.aswb.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/standards-social-work-supervision.pdf

[2] The NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice can be accessed from: https://www.socialworkers.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=7dVckZAYUmk%3D&portalid=0

Regarding the termination of paid supervision, supervisors are advised to request payment solely for services rendered. Both supervisors and supervisees are expected to be knowledgeable about the legislation governing this issue in their respective jurisdictions. The standard also emphasizes the need for supervisors to recognize and address signs of work stress in supervisees. Supervisors are encouraged to prioritize self-care by collaborating with supervisees to identify stressors, providing appropriate resources, and making external referrals when necessary. This proactive approach ensures that supervisees receive the support they need to maintain their professional well-being.

The third standard, which focuses on legal and regulatory issues, addresses the legal responsibilities and liabilities of social work supervisors. According to this standard, the courts determine the extent of a supervisor's liability, holding them directly liable for negligent or inadequate supervision and vicariously liable for the negligent conduct of their supervisees. In terms of liability, the standard notes that a supervisor may be held directly responsible if they provide inappropriate advice that ultimately harms the client.

Regarding legislative considerations, the standard emphasizes that laws and regulations governing supervisor qualifications vary by jurisdiction. Consequently, both supervisors and supervisees are responsible for ensuring that supervisory arrangements meet the specific legal requirements of their respective regions. In many states, for example, legislation mandates that all supervision must be provided by a licensed clinical social worker.

The standard also highlights the importance of documentation as a legal safeguard. Each supervision session should be documented by both the supervisor and the supervisee, and this documentation should be provided to the supervisee within a reasonable time frame. All records must be kept confidential and securely protected. Furthermore, the standard notes that experienced social workers who seek to develop new areas of specialization may face constraints in supervision, as they may be assigned a supervisor based solely on their existing specialization. In such situations, establishing a supervision contract or plan outlining the roles, responsibilities, and obligations of all parties is recommended.

In cases where supervision is mandated following disciplinary action, the standard advises that an agreement be developed between the supervisor, the supervisee, and any relevant authorities. This agreement should define issues such as corrective measures, the scope of information sharing, and the required frequency of supervision sessions. Finally, when conflicts arise or when specialized consultation is necessary, the standard recognizes that social work supervisors may hire external consultants for case consultation and review.

The fourth standard emphasizes ethical considerations in social work supervision. It recognizes that both supervisors and supervisees may encounter ethical dilemmas in their practice and underscores the necessity of a comprehensive understanding of relevant ethical codes to address these challenges. In this context, the NASW Code of Ethics (2021) serves as a foundational guide for supervisors navigating ethical issues within supervisory relationships. Specifically, the NASW Code of Ethics provides directives for supervisory practice under standards 3.0.1(a) through 3.0.1(d). These standards advise that supervisors possess the requisite knowledge and skills for their supervisory roles, refrain from exceeding their areas of expertise, set clear and appropriate professional boundaries, and conduct fair and respectful evaluations of supervisees. Moreover, the Code emphasizes that supervisors should aid supervisees in developing ethical decision-making skills as both cognitive and emotional processes. The supervision process offers a valuable opportunity for educating supervisees about maintaining professional boundaries.

Supervisors are encouraged to teach supervisees about the nature of professional responsibility, the importance of establishing and respecting boundaries, and the ethical obligations involved in responding to inadequate or unethical situations. Regarding self-disclosure, supervisors should be judicious, ensuring that any personal information shared remains brief and directly supports the goals of supervision. Supervisors also bear responsibility for addressing workplace safety concerns. They should inform supervisees about potential risks and provide guidance on responding to conflicts, threats, and harassment, as well as strategies for safeguarding property and managing assaults and their emotional consequences. Additionally, when alternative practices—non-traditional social work interventions—are considered, the supervisor must determine their appropriateness for the client's treatment. Supervisors should either possess or acquire the necessary expertise to ensure that the supervisee is properly trained and knowledgeable in the chosen method. In instances where the supervisor does not have the requisite skills, involving a secondary supervisor with relevant expertise may be necessary. In such cases, both supervisors should work collaboratively to prevent conflicts and ensure that the alternative practice is implemented effectively for the benefit of the client.

The fifth and final standard addresses the use of technology in supervision. It stipulates that when incorporating technological tools into supervision, supervisors and supervisees should adhere to the same standards that govern face-to-face supervisory relationships. The standard also emphasizes the importance of supervisors possessing competence in the use of technology and remaining informed about emerging technological developments.

In discussing remote supervision, the standard acknowledges the increasing reliance on electronic tools and notes that jurisdictions differ in their regulations. Some allow for electronic forms of supervision, while others limit how much supervision may be delivered remotely. Supervisors utilizing technology for remote supervision should be well-versed in standards of best practice and fully aware of the legal frameworks governing these services.

Regarding risk management, the standard highlights that employing technology in supervision carries inherent risks. Supervisors are therefore obligated to ensure that the learning process aligns with the NASW Code of Ethics, NASW and ASWB Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice, the Canadian Code of Ethics for Social Workers, as well as relevant licensing laws and agency policies.

Overall, these standards offer a comprehensive framework designed to promote national consistency in supervision practices across the United States. They serve as a valuable resource guiding both supervisors and supervisees through the ethical, legal, and technological dimensions of social work supervision.

5. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN SOCIAL WORK WITHIN THE USA

This section provides an overview of several key organizations that significantly influence social work education and professional practice in the United States.

5.1. Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)

Established in 1952, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) serves as the national association representing social work education in the United States (Council of Social Work

Education, 2024). Its membership comprises more than 900 accredited baccalaureate and master's level social work programs, as well as individual educators, practitioners, and related organizations. The Commission on Accreditation within CSWE is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in the United States and its territories. As such, the Council's role is strategically central to the academic standards and quality assurance of social work education nationwide.

5.2. National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) represents over 145,000 members, including professionals working across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and abroad (National Association of Social Workers, 2024). NASW is the largest professional organization in the field of social work worldwide. Its primary mission is to enhance the professional growth and development of its members, uphold and advance professional standards, and promote robust social policies that contribute to social justice and community well-being.

5.3. Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)

The Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) is a nonprofit organization that includes social work regulatory boards and universities from all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and 10 Canadian provinces (ASWB, 2024). ASWB's mission is to strengthen public protection by supporting the social work regulatory community. Through providing services and resources, ASWB advances competent and ethical practice within the profession, ensuring that both the public and practitioners benefit from high-quality regulatory standards.

6. CONCLUSION

In the United States, the process of becoming a professional social worker and subsequently advancing into supervisory roles is anchored by a comprehensive framework that integrates accredited education, licensure, and adherence to established best practice standards. Obtaining a degree from a CSWE -accredited program ensures that emerging practitioners possess the requisite theoretical and practical competencies. State-specific licensure requirements further safeguard the public by validating the practitioner's professional qualification and commitment to ethical practice. Meanwhile, professional organizations such as the NASW and the ASWB provide essential guidance and regulatory oversight, thereby fostering a consistent and culturally responsive supervisory environment. Collectively, these interconnected structures ensure that social workers and their supervisors are both well-prepared and accountable, ultimately enhancing the quality and integrity of services provided to diverse client populations.

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Review Article

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Psychological Self-Realization in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*

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abstract

Henry James's The Portrait of a Lady represents a profound exploration of the human psyche, with a particular focus on the psychological struggles of women in the 19th century. The novel employs psychological realism to examine the character of Isabel Archer, an American woman who challenges societal expectations and confronts personal limitations. Through a close textual analysis, the study examines how James utilizes narrative techniques to portray Isabel's psychological struggles as she challenges gender expectations and seeks personal autonomy. The findings reveal that James not only critiques Victorian societal constraints but also offers a timeless exploration of the complexities of individual desire versus societal pressures, contributing to the discourse on female subjectivity in literature.

Keywords: Henry James, psychological realism, *The Portrait of a Lady*, female subjectivity, Isabel Archer

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1. INTRODUCTION

Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* is a profound exploration of the human psyche, particularly the psychological struggles of women in the 19th century. Through the perspective of psychological realism, the novel studies the character of Isabel Archer, a spirited American woman who confronts societal expectations and personal limitations. As a central figure in the development of psychological realism, James employs a range of techniques to reveal the inner workings of his characters' minds. According to Mary S. Schriber (1976, 441) no nineteenth-century American novelist grasped the complexities and nuances of women's position in society better than Henry James. By analyzing Isabel's journey of self-discovery and disillusionment, this paper aims to illuminate the complex interplay between individual desire and societal constraints.

The novel's narrative structure, characterized by its intricate point of view and psychological depth, allows readers to access the characters' thoughts and feelings. James's use of free indirect discourse and stream-of-consciousness techniques further enhances the psychological realism of the text. Through these devices, the reader is invited to inhabit the minds of the characters, experiencing their emotions and perceptions firsthand.

Through a close reading of the text and a critical analysis of its psychological dimensions, this paper seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of James's artistry and his enduring relevance to contemporary readers, and argues that through the psychological development of Isabel Archer, Henry James critiques the restrictive societal norms of the Victorian era, demonstrating how these constraints hinder the self-realization of women.

1.1. Psychological Realism in *The Portrait of a Lady*

Psychological realism, as a literary technique, focuses on the internal lives of characters, studying their thoughts, feelings, and motivations. It seeks to portray the complexity of the human psyche, often exploring themes of consciousness, subconsciousness, and the impact of social and cultural forces on individual behavior. To achieve this nuanced portrayal, psychological realism often intersects with the principles of cognitive psychology, which provides a theoretical framework for understanding the mental processes underlying language and behavior. "Psychological realism adopts the theoretical perspective of cognitive psychology to understand language-related behaviour...It explains language behaviour as the coordinated interaction, in real time, of a set of more primitive capacities or functions that map between inputs and outputs." (Goldrick 2011, 632)

Henry James, a master of psychological realism, employs this technique to great effect in *The Portrait of a Lady*. In this novel, James reveals the psychological depths of Isabel Archer, a young American woman who travels to Europe and becomes entangled in a complex web of relationships. Through the use of multiple narrators and shifting perspectives, James provides readers with a multifaceted view of Isabel's character. Accordingly, the readers witness the heroine's hopes, dreams, and aspirations, as well as her gradual disillusionment and despair.

One of the key aspects of psychological realism in *The Portrait of a Lady* is the exploration of the subconscious mind. James suggests that many of Isabel's actions are motivated by uncon-scious desires and fears. Her attraction to Gilbert Osmond, for example, may be rooted in a deep-seated

longing for a strong, paternal figure. Similarly, her resistance to societal expectations may stem from a subconscious desire for independence and autonomy.

Another important aspect of psychological realism in the novel is the examination of the impact of social and cultural forces on individual psychology. Isabel's experiences are shaped by the gender roles and expectations of the 19th century. As a woman, she is expected to conform to traditional norms of femininity and to prioritize domesticity over personal ambition. However, Isabel challenges these expectations, leading to conflict and ultimately, her downfall.

By examining the psychological underpinnings of Isabel's character and the broader social and cultural context of the novel, this paper aims to offer a nuanced and insightful analysis of James's masterpiece.

1.2. The Role of the Unreliable Narrator in *The Portrait of a Lady*

One of the most intriguing aspects of *The Portrait of a Lady* is James's use of an unreliable narrator. By employing multiple narrators, James creates a complex and ambiguous narrative, allowing readers to question the reliability of the information they receive. This technique adds a layer of psychological depth to the novel, as it invites readers to consider the subjective nature of perception and memory.

The primary narrator of the novel is an unnamed figure who often seems to misunderstand or misinterpret the events they describe. This unreliable narrator can be seen as a reflection of the limitations of human perception and the fallibility of memory. By questioning the reliability of the narrator, James encourages readers to engage in a more active reading experience, forming their own interpretations of the text

The use of an unreliable narrator also allows James to explore the theme of self-deception. Isabel herself is often deceived by her own idealized view of the world. She misinterprets the intentions of others and fails to recognize the true nature of her own desires. This self-deception, coupled with the unreliable narration, creates a sense of uncertainty and ambiguity that permeates the entire novel.

Through the use of an unreliable narrator, James challenges the traditional notion of a single, objective truth. Instead, he suggests that reality is subjective and that our understanding of events is shaped by our own biases and limitations. This approach to narrative allows for a more nuanced and complex exploration of the human psyche, as it acknowledges the role of the subconscious and the limitations of conscious awareness.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* has been the subject of numerous critical analyses, with scholars exploring various aspects of the novel, including its psychological depth, its social commentary, and its formal innovations. While many critics have focused on the novel's exploration of female subjectivity and its critique of societal constraints, fewer have delved into the specific psychological mechanisms that drive Isabel Archer's character development.

One influential interpretation of the novel offered by Ernest Sandeen argues that Isabel's character represents Henry James's "Albany cousin" Mary Temple who died in 1870. According to Sandeen the image of Mary Temple "figured more or less obscurely in several of his stories and minor female characters but according to his own testimony was most fully and consciously operative in his creation of Isabel Archer in *The Portrait of a Lady* and of Milly Theale in *The Wings of the Dove*" (1954, 1060).

Similarly, Lotus Snow (1958) also claims that "certain friends of Henry James recognized that Isabel Archer was modeled after Mary (Minny) Temple, his adored cousin who died at twenty-four of tuberculosis" (312).

Oscar Cargill (1957, 11) highlights James's significant advancement over Shakespeare and George Eliot by noting that James was inspired to make his heroine the central focus of his narrative rather than merely a contributing character. Cargill (1957) maintains that unlike Shakespeare and Eliot, who, despite their deep interest in their heroines, did not fully center their works around them, James positioned his heroine at the very core of the story. He centered everything within her consciousness, placing particular emphasis on her self-perception, thereby surpassing his predecessors in his portrayal of a female protagonist.

Critics such as Quentin Anderson (1957) defended the idea that the form of the novel is incomplete based on the belief that "the novel closes at the moment when Isabel has her foot on the threshold of the adult world" (190). Anderson believes "the book clearly seems more rounded off to him than it can to the uninitiated reader" (189). In opposition to this view, Lyall H. Powers (1959) defends the idea that "the form of the novel is complete and, once identified, familiar and indeed satisfactory. The form of the novel is, of course, essentially the pattern traced by the career of Isabel Archer, the career which begins within the sheltered confines of Gardencourt and leads her via Rome to Gardencourt again" (144-145). According to Powers "Isabel's career is defined quite strictly by the polarity set up in the novel between Ralph Touchett and Gilbert Osmond; and we must be clearly aware of this polarity in order [to properly] appreciate the heroine's career" (145).

Another important critical perspective is provided by Linda A. Westervelt (1983), who emphasizes the novel's formal innovations, particularly its use of point of view. Westervelt argues that James's complex narrative technique allows readers to access the characters' consciousnesses and to experience the story from multiple perspectives. This technique, she suggests, enhances the psychological realism of the novel. According to Westervelt:

> Focusing on the work of his major phase, critics have pointed out James's contribution to shaping the modern novel, especially the direct presentation of character and the absence of authorial guidance.' However, that contribution begins much earlier with The Portrait of a Lady, which opens with the conventions of a Victorian novel but ends as a modern one. Looking at James's notion of history, comparing the narrator's introduction of Isabel Archer with his direct presentation of her during her meditative vigil, and considering the implications of having the Countess Gemini reveal Pansy's heritage will show the extent of James's early experimentation and the importance of The Portrait for the modern novel. (1983, 75)

More recent scholarship has focused on the novel's different implications. Annette Niemtzow (1975, 377) puts forth that marriage was a central theme in James's family, with the novelist's father, Henry James Sr., deeply invested in marital discourse. While *The Portrait of a Lady* seemingly critiques the transcendental idealism of James's father, the novel's narrative - where Isabel Archer chooses to remain in an unhappy marriage - paradoxically aligns with Henry James Sr.'s views on marital relationships. These perspectives were most prominently articulated in public debates in the New York Tribune in 1852 and later in a series of marriage-focused papers in the Atlantic

Monthly in 1870. Niemtzow's study provides valuable insights into the ongoing debates about traditional marriage as reflected in the New York Tribune and Atlantic Monthly in the mid-19th century.

In his recent study, Casey M. Walker (2013, 161) asserts that in James's *The Portrait of a Lady*, urban landscapes are deeply intertwined with the inner workings of his characters' minds. This intricate relationship prompts readers to look beyond mere historical accounts or physical descriptions of cities like London and Rome, urging a sensitivity to the dynamic interplay between imagination and material space.

By building upon these existing interpretations, this paper aims to offer a fresh perspective on *The Portrait of a Lady* by focusing on the psychological underpinnings of Isabel's character. By analyzing the specific psychological mechanisms that drive her choices and experiences, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the novel's enduring significance.

3. ANALYSIS OF ISABEL ARCHER'S CHARACTER

Isabel Archer, the novel's protagonist, is a complex and enigmatic figure who embodies the tension between individual desire and societal expectation. Initially presented as an independent and spirited young woman, Isabel possesses a strong sense of self and a desire for autonomy. However, her idealism and romantic notions of love and marriage ultimately lead to her downfall.

One of the key psychological mechanisms that drives Isabel's character is her tendency toward self-deception. She often deludes herself into believing that she can control her own destiny, despite the constraints imposed upon her by societal norms and expectations. This self-deception allows her to maintain a sense of agency, even as she becomes increasingly trapped in a loveless marriage.

The following dialogue between Isabel Archer and Henrietta Stackpole in the novel serves as a poignant exploration of the protagonist's internal struggle within her unhappy marriage:

> "Yes, I'm wretched," she said very mildly. She hated to hear herself say it; she tried to say it as judicially as possible.
> "What does he do to you?" Henrietta asked, frowning as if she were enquiring into the operations of a quack doctor.
> "He does nothing. But he doesn't like me."
> "He's very hard to please!" cried Miss Stackpole. "Why don't you leave him ?"
> "I can't change that way," Isabel said.
> "Why not, I should like to know? You won't confess that you've made a mistake. You're too proud."
> " I don't know whether I'm too proud. But I can't publish my mistake. I don't think that's decent. I'd much rather die." (654)

This exchange occurs at a critical juncture in the novel, where Isabel confronts the emotional neglect she endures from her husband, Gilbert Osmond. Through their conversation, James explores the themes of personal freedom, societal constraints, and the complexities of self-sacrifice. The interaction not only highlights the stark contrast between Isabel's passive resignation and Henrietta's assertive pragmatism but also underscores the psychological depth of the characters. Analyzing this moment reveals James's mastery in portraying the nuanced struggles of the human spirit against the backdrop of Victorian societal expectations.

Another pivotal dialogue is the one leading up to Osmond's marriage proposal. Despite warnings from friends and family about Osmond's true nature, Isabel is swayed by his crafted persona.

In their conversations, Osmond flatters her intelligence and portrays himself as someone who truly understands her. He appeals to her sense of adventure and desire for a profound connection. Isabel perceives this as an opportunity to explore uncharted territories in her personal life, further fueling her impulsive decision to accept his proposal.

> "I haven't the idea that it will matter much to you," said Osmond. "I've too little to offer you. What I have - it's enough for me; but it's not enough for you. I've neither fortune, nor fame, nor extrinsic advantages of any kind. So, I offer nothing. I only tell you because I think it can't offend you, and some day or other it may give you pleasure. It gives me pleasure, I assure you," he went on, standing there before her, considerately inclined to her, turning his hat, which he had taken up, slowly round with a movement which had all the decent tremor of awkwardness and none of its oddity, and presenting to her his firm, refined, slightly ravaged face.
> "It gives me no pain, because it's perfectly simple. For me you'll always be the most important woman in the world." (424)

It is possible to state that another important aspect of Isabel's psychology is her fascination with the unknown. She is drawn to mystery and intrigue, and she often seeks out experiences that challenge her sense of self. This desire for novelty and excitement leads her to make impulsive decisions, such as accepting Gilbert Osmond's marriage proposal.

As the novel progresses, Isabel's idealism is gradually eroded by the harsh realities of life. She comes to realize that her dreams of love and happiness are unattainable, and she is forced to confront the limitations of her own agency. This disillusionment leads to a profound sense of despair and a loss of hope.

3.1. Isabel's Character in the Context of the 19th-Century Society

Isabel Archer's character is deeply rooted in the societal and cultural context of the 19th century. Her experiences and choices are shaped by the limited opportunities available to women during this time.

In order to comprehend the character of Isabel Archer in full, it is essential to take into consideration the cultural and historical context of the novel, as well as the three central themes of the cult of domesticity, the role of marriage and the representation of the American girl abroad.

The 19th century was a time of significant social and political change, particularly in terms of gender roles and women's rights. Women were often confined to domestic spheres and expected to prioritize marriage and motherhood over personal ambition. For example, in his article *Is Marriage Holy?* (1870) Henry James Sr. explains that marriage has two sides: it's both a legal agreement enforced by laws and a moral commitment guided by conscience. He considers a situation where one spouse is unfaithful. While the law allows the other spouse to seek legal action, he suggests that conscience might lead them to forgive instead of seeking revenge. James highlights the difference between laws that control outward behavior to maintain order, and inner moral principles that shape our character and promote kindness and social harmony. He believes that the true sanctity of marriage is found in its social purpose - the nurturing of the family as the foundation of society - rather than in selfish interests or strictly legal righteousness. Ultimately, he advocates focusing on the true spirit of marriage and the well-being of society, rather than pursuing personal revenge when facing marital problems.

Isabel's character challenges these traditional gender roles. She is an intelligent, independent, and willful woman who desires intellectual stimulation and personal growth. However, her aspirations

are often thwarted by the societal expectations of her time. Her marriage to Gilbert Osmond, a controlling and manipulative man, further restricts her freedom and limits her opportunities for self-fulfillment.

The novel's exploration of Isabel's experiences highlights the limitations imposed on women in the 19th century. Her struggle for autonomy and self-determination is a reflection of the broader societal challenges faced by women during this period. By examining Isabel's character in the context of her time, we can gain a deeper appreciation of the novel's enduring relevance and its critique of patriarchal norms.

The Cult of Domesticity: A pervasive ideology in the 19th century, the Cult of Domesticity prescribed that women should confine themselves to the domestic sphere, focusing on domestic duties, child-rearing, and religious piety. Isabel, however, defies this expectation. She seeks intellectual stimulation and personal fulfillment beyond the domestic realm.

The Role of Marriage: Marriage was often viewed as a means of social and economic security for women in the 19th century. It was also seen as a way to fulfill one's duty to society and family. While Isabel initially rejects conventional notions of marriage, she eventually succumbs to societal pressures and marries Gilbert Osmond. Her marriage, however, proves to be a source of misery and constraint, as Osmond's controlling nature and her own disillusionment undermine her hopes for happiness.

The American Girl Abroad: As an American woman traveling to Europe, Isabel embodies the trope of the "American Girl Abroad." This figure was often portrayed as innocent, idealistic, and vulnerable, easily susceptible to the temptations and corruptions of the European society. While Isabel possesses a strong sense of self, she is nonetheless influenced by the expectations and pressures of European high society.

By examining Isabel's character in the context of the 19th century society, we can appreciate the depth and complexity of James's novel. Her struggle for autonomy and self-fulfillment is a timeless theme that resonates with readers across generations.

3.2. Isabel's Idealism and Its Consequences

Isabel Archer's idealism is a central aspect of her character, both propelling her forward and ultimately leading to her downfall. Her romantic notions of love and marriage, combined with her desire for independence, create a complex and often contradictory psychological profile.

Isabel's idealism allows her to envision a life of freedom and self-fulfillment, but it also blinds her to the harsh realities of the world. She is drawn to Gilbert Osmond, a man who initially appears to embody her romantic ideals, but who ultimately proves to be a manipulative and controlling figure.

> As Isabel embarks on her 'free exploration' of life, Henrietta is outspoken in declaring that she is drifting rather to 'some great mistake' that she is not enough 'in contact with reality,' with the 'toiling, striving' world. Ralph tells her that 'she has too much conscience'- a peculiarly American complication in the romantic temperament. Although all her diverse friends are united in their disapproval of Osmond, she proceeds to do the wrong thing for the right reasons. She has a special pride in marrying him, since she feels that she is not only 'taking,' but also 'giving', she feels too the release of transferring some of the burden of her inheritance to another's conscience James' way of commenting on how harm was done to her by her money. (Mathiessen 1944, 183)

Isabel's belief in her own ability to shape her own destiny leads her to make impulsive decisions, such as accepting Osmond's marriage proposal. She is convinced that she can transform him and their marriage into something beautiful, but she soon realizes the futility of her efforts.

As the novel progresses, Isabel's idealism is gradually eroded by the harsh realities of her marriage. She becomes increasingly isolated and disillusioned, and she struggles to maintain her sense of self. As Mathiessen states "but once she discerns what Osmond is really like, and how he has trapped her, she is by no means supine in his toils. She stands up to him with dignity" (1944, 183) Her initial optimism and hope are replaced by a sense of despair and resignation.

By examining the role of idealism in Isabel's character, we can gain a deeper understanding of the psychological complexities of the novel. Her journey from idealistic youth to disillusioned adulthood reflects the universal human experience of confronting the gap between dreams and reality.

3.3. Isabel's Struggle for Autonomy

A significant aspect of Isabel's character is her relentless pursuit of autonomy. She yearns for independence and the freedom to make her own choices, unconstrained by societal expectations or familial pressures. This desire for self-determination is a recurring theme throughout the novel.

However, Isabel's quest for autonomy is often hindered by external forces. Her marriage to Gilbert Osmond, for example, severely limits her freedom and subjects her to his controlling nature. Despite her initial resistance, she gradually succumbs to his influence, as her options become increasingly limited.

Isabel's struggle for autonomy also reflects the broader societal constraints imposed on women in the 19th century. As a woman, she is expected to conform to traditional gender roles and to prioritize domesticity over personal ambition. Her defiance of these expectations challenges the patriarchal norms of the time.

By examining Isabel's struggle for autonomy, we can gain a deeper understanding of the novel's feminist implications. Her character serves as a powerful symbol of female resistance and a critique of the limitations imposed on women in the 19th century.

4. CONCLUSION

Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* is a profound exploration of the human psyche, particularly the psychological struggles of women in the 19th century. Through the lens of psychological realism, the novel delves into the character of Isabel Archer, a spirited American woman who confronts societal expectations and personal limitations. By analyzing Isabel's journey of self-discovery and disillusionment, this paper has illuminated the complex interplay between individual desire and societal constraints.

A central theme of the novel is the tension between individual freedom and social conformity. Isabel, a strong-willed and independent woman, challenges the societal norms of her time. However, her pursuit of autonomy is ultimately thwarted by the limitations imposed upon her by gender, class, and cultural expectations.

The novel's exploration of the human psyche is further enhanced by James's use of psychological realism. Through the use of techniques such as free indirect discourse and stream-of-consciousness,

James delves into the inner thoughts and feelings of his characters. This allows readers to experience the story from a subjective perspective, gaining insight into the complexities of human consciousness.

Moreover, the unreliable narrator adds a layer of ambiguity and complexity to the narrative. By questioning the reliability of the narrator, James invites the readers to engage in a more active reading experience, forming their own interpretations of the text. This technique also highlights the subjective nature of perception and memory, emphasizing the limitations of human understanding.

In conclusion, *The Portrait of a Lady* remains a powerful and enduring work of literature. Through its exploration of the human psyche, its critique of societal norms, and its innovative use of narrative techniques, the novel continues to resonate with the readership today. By examining the psychological underpinnings of Isabel Archer's character and the broader social and cultural context of the novel, we can gain a deeper appreciation of James's artistry and his enduring relevance.

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Review Article

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The Impact of Social Work Practices in the United States of America with a Multicultural Structure

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abstract

This study examines the role of social work practice in adapting to social diversity in the United States, a multicultural society. The historical development process of social work in the USA and various social work fields are discussed from the perspective of cultural awareness and social justice advocacy. The study focuses on social service areas such as family, poverty, child and youth problems, old age, disability, and education, and evaluates the potential of practices in these areas to ensure social welfare and strengthen social cohesion. The findings show that social workers' provision of services sensitive to cultural diversity is effective in overcoming systemic barriers experienced by disadvantaged groups. At the end of the study, it is recommended that cultural competency trainings should be increased, and community-based programs should be expanded for social work in the USA to better adapt to the multicultural structure. This study analyzes the practices in the USA for the development of more effective service models in the field of multicultural social work and sheds light on future research.

Keywords: *multiculturalism, social work, cultural awareness, social service*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The coexistence of societies with different cultural structures has remained an important problem to be solved throughout history. In this context, while some states have adopted policies aimed at eliminating these differences when faced with groups different from their own ethnic and cultural structures, other states have been able to implement the policy of coexistence of differences more successfully than others (Aktay, 2003, 57). While certain problems faced by individuals in social life and the solutions offered at the micro and macro level to these problems are universal, some of them are culture specific. This situation, which shows similarities and differences on the basis of society and culture in the historical process, constitutes the basis of the social work profession in terms of ensuring the active participation of the individual in social life. Describing the basic problems and solutions produced in the problem areas related to social work arising from the social structures of different cultures contributes to the field of social work from various perspectives (Cantekin, 2019, 292). By examining the social structures and social service areas of different cultures, it is possible to analyze similar problem areas between cultures, to identify differences and to make comparative analyses of social problems and solutions.

Social work practices are more common in heterogeneous societies where social diversity and cultural differences are intense (Uzunaslan, 2022, 181). When it comes to cultural diversity, the first country that comes to mind in the world is the United States of America. The USA is considered one of the most developed countries in the world; it has achieved this position thanks to its political, economic, demographic, and social conditions. In addition, the USA is seen as one of the pioneering countries in the field of social work practices (Aktan, 2014, 44). Multiculturalism has had a great impact on the field of social work in the United States after its 100-year history. It does not matter which racial or ethnic group a social worker belongs to; what really matters is the knowledge with which a social worker must understand the client and his or her problems (Hugman, 1996, 131).

Self-awareness of one's own privileges is necessary for multicultural counseling. This awareness is of great importance for social workers to understand the complex dynamics of race and privilege in their interactions with clients from different backgrounds. The inclusion of social justice themes in social work pedagogy supports the development of a critical consciousness among practitioners, which in turn enables them to challenge systemic inequalities more strongly (Mindrup et al., 2011, 20).

The purpose of this study is to reveal the current problems in the field of social work stemming from the ethnic and cultural diversity in the multicultural United States and the social and cultural contributions of the institutional solutions to these problems for the country. The study addresses social service areas such as family, poverty, childhood and youth, old age, criminality, disability, education, and unemployment; and it also furnishes some relevant information on the services provided by the state to cope with these problems. This study sheds light on the important social and cultural contributions of social work on a country basis.

2. MULTICULTURAL SOCIAL WORK

A fundamental aspect of multicultural social work is that cultural competence is considered a vital skill for practitioners. It involves the ability to understand, communicate, and interact effectively

with people from different cultures. It includes awareness of one's own cultural biases, knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and the skills needed to relate to clients from different backgrounds (Ramsey et al., 2003, 19; Ulutaş et al., 2022, 331). This competency is necessary for social workers to provide effective services and advocate for social justice in multicultural contexts (Zalaquett et al., 2008, 323; Constantine et al., 2008, 348). Multicultural social work is an approach that emphasizes the importance of understanding and integrating different cultural perspectives into social work practice.

Multicultural social work is closely linked to social justice advocacy. Effective social work must address the cultural values and beliefs of diverse clients while addressing systemic barriers that impede their well-being (Ratts and Greenleaf, 2018, 1). The rise of multicultural and social justice movements has led to the development of multicultural and advocacy competencies (Toporek et al., 2009, 260). Multicultural social work practice also includes understanding the historical and social contexts of different cultural groups. For example, the experiences of refugees and immigrants are shaped by their unique backgrounds, which can impact their integration into society and access to resources. It has been determined that participation in outreach programs targeting refugee populations can enhance social workers' multicultural competencies and advocacy skills, thereby increasing their effectiveness in serving these communities (Nilsson et al., 2011, 413). Multicultural social work is seen as a critical approach that aims to increase the effectiveness of social work practice by bringing together cultural awareness, competence, and social justice advocacy. As demographics continue to change, the importance of a multicultural perspective in social work will only increase, creating a need for ongoing education and training for social workers to respond to the diverse needs of the communities they serve.

3. MULTI-CULTURAL SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States stands out as the country with the most ethnic diversity in the world. Although countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand follow the United States in this regard, the United States has long been the main destination for immigrants.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries are of critical importance in the development of the social work profession. With the economic crisis experienced in the United States in the early 1890s, philanthropic organizations and volunteer organizations made their services more effective in supporting the lives of individuals in despair. During this period, the need for professionals trained in social work methods also increased and in line with this need, the New York Philanthropic Society pioneered the provision of courses for social workers in the country. As a result of these experiences, 17 social work schools were established in the United States by 1919 and these schools formed the American Association of Schools of Social Work (Acar and Duyan, 2003, 3). From the beginning of the 20th century onwards, social work began to focus on the social environment in which individuals lived. The concept of philanthropy developed with a more positive perspective to prevent social disorders and ensure individual welfare. During the same period, structures such as councils, federations and funds emerged; "Community Welfare Councils" established by existing social welfare institutions struggled with problems such as unemployment and poverty, especially during the Great Depression (Koşar, 1986, 85). The mid-20th century was a period when significant social problems affecting large masses were experienced. This situation required social workers to find solutions to human problems, and new problem-solving methods and theories were developed during this period. During these years, social work acquired a strong theoretical infrastructure, and its professional identity became more apparent. However, by the end of the 20th century, there were disappointments in terms of the social welfare system; unemployment and

poverty problems continued to remain on the agenda. During the same period, interest in social problems such as homelessness, AIDS, substance abuse, peace and justice increased in the USA (Acar and Duyan, 2003, 16).

When we look at the social service areas in the USA today, we see that family, poverty, childhood and youth, old age, disability, and education are important in the functioning of society.

In the context of the concept of family, the family institution in the USA stands out as a structure that varies in terms of definition and function. With the increase in divorce, remarriage and cohabitation rates, the traditional family structure where both mother and father are together is gradually decreasing. With this change in family structure, the roles assigned to mothers have also changed and as more mothers join the workforce, they have started to take their place among the individuals who undertake the breadwinner of the family (PEW Research Center, 2015). It is seen that 40-50% of marriages in the USA end in divorce, and this rate is higher in remarriages (APA, 2024). According to the American Family Survey conducted by Kopowitz and Pope (2018) "it is not the case that the American Family is in steep decline, or that it is achieving new highs"(63). The same survey, which was conducted by 3,000 American adults, clearly indicates that the main problems of the American family are classified as economic, cultural, family structure and stability-related problems (4). Social services are provided under various headings in the USA to provide support to the family. These services include early childhood and childcare, educational services including special education, employment and development programs for youth and adults, family health services (pregnancy, dental health, prenatal care, adolescent pregnancy prevention and nutrition for women, infants, and children), housing (for low-income families), short-term care, services for children and youth with disabilities, and family planning. These services are provided through home visits, parent training, parent support groups and family support centers (Cantekin, 2019, 295).

Poverty is one of the important service areas of social work. Among the reasons why working-age individuals experience poverty in the USA, factors such as illness or disability (30%), lack of education (28%), family reasons (26%), early retirement (10%) and inability to find a job (6%) stand out. According to the 2023 data, the overall poverty rate in the USA was determined as 11.1%. Ethnic-based poverty rates were recorded as 75.3% for whites, 13.7% for blacks, 6.4% for Asians and 19.5% for Hispanics or Latinos (USCB, 2023). The USA sees the problem of poverty as largely outside the responsibility of the state. In this context, policies to combat poverty are mostly carried out by charitable individuals and organizations. The state encourages philanthropy and provides support in the fight against poverty by providing high tax deductions to individuals and organizations that carry out these charitable activities (Korkmaz, 2023, 163).

Child and youth Issues also constitute an important area of social work in the USA. In general, the main problems faced by children in the USA include poverty, child abuse, health problems, child labor, malnutrition, child delinquency and child military service. These problems may also vary according to ethnicity. For example, although American laws on child labor are generally effectively implemented, thousands of children, especially Hispanic children, are employed in agricultural work that requires intense physical effort. To prevent these problems, the US federal government provides resources to states to implement various social welfare programs. These programs include Food Assistance (The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program SNAP), Health Services (Medicaid and The Children's Health Insurance Program CHIP), Housing

Assistance (rent support and The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program LIHEAP), Financial Assistance (Welfare or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families TANF and Supplemental Security Income SSI) as well as unemployment insurance support (Cantekin, 2019, 296).

The issue of old age is an important problem area in the USA. The main problems faced by elderly individuals can be examined under the headings of physical and mental health problems, costs of health services, nursing home care, financial security, loss of relatives, social isolation and loneliness, and elder abuse (Pardue-Spears, 2018, online). The federal government takes various measures and carries out programs regarding these problems of elderly individuals. The services provided within this scope include housing support, health support (Medicare and Medicaid), nutritional support including meal services for elderly people with disabilities or living alone, vocational development and employment programs. The most important institution that coordinates services for elderly people is the Administration for Community Living (ACL). Its web site briefly says: "The Administration for Community Living (ACL) supports the needs of the aging and disability populations, and improves access health care and long-term services" (usa.gov).

In the USA, disability is one of the social problem areas that affects society the most. The basic sociocultural value that affects the development of the phenomenon of disability is individuality. The individualistic structure of American society also affects other sociocultural values, making it difficult for disabled individuals to integrate with individuals with other types of disabilities. In addition, disabled individuals in the USA are exposed to prejudice and discrimination, such as African Americans and other marginalized groups. These discriminatory attitudes have inspired the development of the disability movement that has adopted an advocacy approach that combats discrimination. "The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)' has been the main protection for people with disabilities against discrimination in employment, public accommodations, public transportation, and telecommunications" (Scotch, 2000, 213). In this context, the American Independent Living Movement arose to emphasize that disabled individuals have the same options and degree of freedom as non-disabled individuals (Güloğlu, 2022, 83). Since then, there have been various assistance programs carried out at the federal and state levels for the disabled. These programs provide services in the areas such as housing, employment, transportation, health services, education, justice, veterans, financial assistance, and general life support. In addition, there are some institutions that provide services in special areas. These include organizations such as the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN), the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) affiliated with the Department of Education, and the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) (Cantekin, 2019, 299).

When we look at the fundamental problems in the US education system, the following topics stand out: insufficient parental involvement in their children's education, frequent school closures, crowded classrooms, negative effects of technology, limited program diversity for students with special abilities, stagnant investments in education, outdated teacher training methods, and insufficient room for innovation. In addition, students who drop out of school are vulnerable to delinquency. Inadequate studies on students who drop out of high school, inequality in education, academic achievement levels below expectations, school security issues, decreased prestige of the teaching profession, and inadequacy of services for students with disabilities are also considered important problems. In addition, difficulties in teaching English as a second language, especially for refugees and immigrants, violence in schools and peer bullying are among the other important problems encountered in the US education system (Lynch, 2017, edweek.org).

The field of school social work makes significant contributions to the solution process of problems experienced in education. The main service groups of this field are aimed at students, families, school personnel, residents of school districts, and all individuals related to the school-community relationship. For example, services for students include activities such as guidance on strategies to increase academic success, providing conflict management and anger management support, and helping them develop proper social interaction skills (sswaa.org, 2024). In the USA, most school social workers are employed in elementary and secondary schools. While some specialists work with different age groups, others are responsible for a specific age group. School social workers are increasingly working in preschool programs or with special population groups such as homeless students (Aktan, 2014, 48).

4. EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MULTICULTURAL SOCIAL WORK

Developing cultural competence in terms of social work is a process that involves going through various stages from cultural inadequacy to cultural competence. This model is important for social workers to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to work with various population groups.

Multicultural education integrated into social work curricula will enhance practitioners' understanding of multicultural principles and enhance their ability to effectively serve diverse populations (Akintayo et al., 2016, 395). This will prepare social workers to navigate cultural complexities and create space for social justice and advocacy in social work practice.

Cultural awareness is an essential component of cultural competence. Cultural awareness involves recognizing one's own cultural identity and prejudices. Social workers should understand how their cultural background affects their perceptions and interactions with their clients (Balaba, 2023, 44). Cultural sensitivity involves recognizing and respecting the cultural differences of clients. Social workers should be sensitive to the unique experiences and challenges faced by individuals from different backgrounds. Aydın et al. (2019, 1029) state that educators play a vital role in promoting cultural sensitivity among students, which is essential for creating inclusive learning environments

At the cultural proficiency level, social workers not only apply their knowledge and skills but also advocate for systemic changes that promote equity and social justice (Ratts et al., 2016, 28). Developing multicultural and social justice competence is a lifelong process in which counsellors aim to continuously advance their understanding of and commitment to multicultural and social justice competence and to practice cultural humility in their work (Hook et al., 2013, 353).

The social work profession places an emphasis on working with minority populations, particularly African Americans (Basham, 2004, 290). The political dimension of multicultural social work education also plays an important role in shaping an effective practice. It is discussed how political relations and power dynamics affect social work education and practice, especially in multicultural contexts (Nadan et al., 2015, 362). Politics in social work are relationships and activities that reflect differences in power and values and that influence critical decisions regarding the distribution of resources, rights, access, opportunities, and status (Reisch and Jani, 2012, 1135). The effectiveness of social work in a multicultural society is increasingly recognized for meeting the diverse needs of clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. .

4.1 Multicultural Competence in Social Work Practice

Culturally sensitive social work practice recognizes diversity within and across cultural groups and seeks to address the unique needs and challenges faced by marginalized communities (Dorsett et al., 2015, 896). Multicultural competence and cultural sensitivity are interrelated concepts that are important for effective social work practice in diverse communities.

Multicultural competence refers to the knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable social workers to work effectively with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. It includes understanding one's own cultural biases, learning about different cultural values and practices, and developing the ability to adapt interventions to be culturally relevant. Competence encompasses awareness, knowledge and skills to connect effectively with various ethnicities and cultures from diverse groups. Multicultural competence can be defined as a unique categorization of awareness, knowledge and skills to work efficiently in a culture.

Cultural sensitivity is the ability to recognize, appreciate and respect the unique cultural characteristics and experiences of individuals and communities. It means being aware of one's own cultural biases, avoiding stereotyping, and adapting communication and intervention strategies to be culturally appropriate.

Multicultural competence and cultural sensitivity are important for social workers to provide effective and equitable services in multicultural contexts. Multicultural competence provides knowledge and skills, cultural humility promotes an attitude of openness and respect, and cultural sensitivity guides the tailoring of interventions to meet the specific needs of diverse clients.

4.2. Multicultural Education in Social Work Curricula

In preparing social workers for social work practice, it is important to include course content related to cultural competence in an up-to-date curriculum (Melendres, 2020, 108). Social work curricula emphasise diversity and difference to train social workers who are culturally competent and provide practices that are sensitive to clients from different ethnic and racial groups (Boyle and Springer, 2008, 53). This awareness is important for developing empathy and respect for clients' cultural backgrounds.

Multicultural curricula and teaching strategies should be incorporated into social work programs to prepare future practitioners for the complexities of working in diverse settings. To support the integration of multicultural societies, it is vital to implement policy measures that support improving people's attitudes towards refugees (Butkus et. al., 2016, 296). In addition, teachers need to confront their own attitudes towards migrant and refugee children and create classrooms where multicultural education and respect for all children take place.

As social workers begin to recognize their own cultural identities and biases, they move to the stage of cultural awareness. This means understanding the importance of culture in shaping individuals' experiences and perspectives. Culturally competent practitioners are needed to ensure social justice for clients, increase accessibility to available resources, and meet respective needs (Gallegos et al., 2018, 51). By promoting cultural competence, social workers can improve their practice, promote social justice, and better serve the communities they work with.

4.3. Effective Strategies for Working with Diverse Populations

In social work practice effective strategies for working with diverse communities include a multifaceted approach that emphasizes cultural competence, humility and sensitivity.

To develop cultural competence, it is important to develop a deep understanding of diverse cultural values, beliefs and practices. However, it is also necessary to learn about the unique challenges and experiences of marginalized communities and tailor services accordingly. Social workers need to recognize the limits of their own cultural knowledge and the importance of collaborating with clients, recognize diversity within and between cultural groups, and act culturally appropriately when communicating.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This article reveals the role of social work practices in adapting to cultural differences in the United States, which has a multicultural society structure. The long-term development process of the social work profession in the United States shows that multicultural social work practices make significant contributions to the social structure. Social workers in the United States offer service models structured according to the requirements of the multicultural society structure and carry out comprehensive support programs to ensure the well-being of various segments of society. Social services provided in areas such as family, poverty, child and youth problems, old age, disability and education offer solutions to social problems by considering cultural diversity and encourage individuals' active participation in life.

It has been observed that social workers' cultural awareness, competence and advocacy of social justice increase service effectiveness in multicultural societies. The inclusion of social justice and cultural diversity themes in the social work curriculum in the USA has strengthened the professional field by contributing to practitioners' development a sense of critical consciousness indispensable in combating social inequalities. In this context, multicultural social work practices serve the goals of supporting social harmony, defending the rights of disadvantaged groups, and increasing individuals' opportunities for self-actualization.

For social work to adapt more effectively to the multicultural structure in the USA and to provide more comprehensive solutions to the various needs of society, increasing cultural competence training of social workers will enable them to provide more sensitive and effective services to different ethnic groups. In addition, it is important to expand community-based programs in the field of social work, especially in regions with a large immigrant and refugee population. The importance of combating discrimination and rights-based services should be emphasized.

The boundaries of this study are limited to the USA example and focus on specific social service areas. In future studies, the impact of multicultural social work can be addressed comparatively with other countries with multicultural societies. In addition, conducting empirical research to determine the effectiveness of multicultural social work will increase the knowledge in the field.

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